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**THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF A UNIVERSITY
LAW CLINIC SUPERVISOR: AN
AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC INQUIRY**

ELAINE GREGERSEN

DLaw

March 2019

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF A UNIVERSITY LAW CLINIC SUPERVISOR: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC INQUIRY

ELAINE GREGERSEN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the University of Northumbria at
Newcastle for the degree of Professional Doctorate

Research undertaken in
Northumbria Law School

March 2019

Abstract

Supervision is an acknowledged hallmark of clinical legal education (Giddings, 2013; Evans et al., 2017). Law clinic supervisors are at the heart of delivering the full possibilities of the clinic environment. However, despite the recognised value of supervision within law clinics, research on the supervisory role is limited. Existing studies overwhelmingly provide detached advice designed to increase the effectiveness of supervisory practice for the benefit of clinic students. There is a paucity of detailed insider accounts examining the realities of being a supervisor. The literature is fragmented, out of date, and lacks deeply critical analysis of supervisors' lived experiences.

Methodologically, clinical legal education research is in a relatively early developmental stage, reliant on single case studies, outcome evaluations, and narratives of congruence intended to underpin clinical development. There is little use of comparative methods, large data sets, and contemporary reflexive autobiographical methods like autoethnography which require engagement with ambiguity and complexity. While academic autoethnography, where the researcher studies their own experience working in higher education, is on the rise, this remains uncharted territory for legal educators of all persuasions including law clinic supervisors. Even within autoethnography, instructions as to the practicalities of autoethnographic research remain ambiguous. There are unresolved ethical debates and guidance on the research praxis lacks specificity (Wall, 2006), especially for researchers wishing to analyse their data.

In doing so, this thesis makes several important contributions to clinical legal education scholarship. I provide new evidence relating to supervisory identity, reaffirm existing knowledge of the challenges facing a supervisor throughout the academic year, and add depth and quality to a significantly limited body of literature on the emotional impact of law clinic supervision. My data reveals patterns of action and attention that illuminate the 'load' of the supervisor, with critical implications for the training and support of clinical educators. By connecting my insider experience to broader conversations about the culture of clinical legal education, this study also extends the discourse on institutional practice and well-being.

In addition, this thesis critically unpacks several methodological grey areas. Specifically, it shows in rich detail how to (a) use a reflexive diary to capture autoethnographic data and (b) then

utilise thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to examine the diary entries. I offer a step by step transparent guide to these two underexamined, but effective, approaches to autoethnographic practice. I also make timely and comprehensive contributions to the debates on the rewards and limitations of autoethnography, dedicating an entire chapter to the ethical dilemmas I faced as an autoethnographer. I am particularly proud of the contribution this thesis makes to our understanding of the potential dangers lurking in the process of both reading powerful and challenging autoethnographic material and producing self-reflective writing ourselves.

Using a deeply reflexive and expressive narrative, this thesis weaves autoethnography and clinical legal education together. It champions methodological innovation and lays the groundwork for more stories to emerge and develop our understanding of law clinic supervisory life.

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A very special thank you to my husband Mark, who probably never imagined he would be lying in bed late at night debating the merits of positivism with me. I convinced myself so many times that I would never finish this Professional Doctorate. You always encouraged me. You supported me to make sensible, pragmatic plans. You saw when I was over-tired and you stopped everything to help me wind down and convince me to leave things to another day. You have been by my side throughout this PhD, living it with me. I love you very much.

And finally, to the two little people in my tummy. You have been with me for just over 14 weeks now. Despite the seemingly never-ending nausea and vomiting, my new-found desire to eat ready salted crisps at 4am, and tiredness I cannot begin to describe, these past few months have been the most joyful I have ever experienced. Once upon a time, this Professional Doctorate was just about me. Now, it is about us and our future. I cannot wait to meet you both. I promise I won't rabbit on about qualitative research methods too much.

Postscript: In May 2019, just 10 days after my Viva and much to everyone's surprise, I gave birth to two beautiful tiny babies. They were 24 weeks, 3 days gestation and, collectively, weighed just over 3lbs. As I write this, our quirky big-eyed son Blake is fighting hard. He has had countless infections, surgeries, blood transfusions, and so many other interventions and tests I don't know where to start. I am so proud of everything he has achieved in his short life. I always look forward to seeing him. Our eldest son Henry was with us for less than a week. He was lovely. I often cry in the car at the unfairness of it all. And when I'm sad and driving to and from the hospital to visit Blake, funny songs randomly come on the car radio. And I say, "OK, Henry. I'll cheer up". This Professional Doctorate, and everything to come from it, is for Henry and Blake.

Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Faculty Ethics Committee on 21 October 2015.

I declare that the Word Count of this Thesis is 58,644 words excluding tables, bibliography, and appendices.

Name: Elaine Gregersen

Signature:

Date: 19 March 2019

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

People travel to wonder at the height of the mountains; at the huge waves of the seas; at the long course of the rivers; at the vast compass of the ocean; at the circular motion of the stars; and yet they pass by themselves without wondering (St. Augustine, 397)

1.1 Context and research objectives

I joined Northumbria Law School as a Solicitor Tutor in 2011. My contract said I would be required to contribute to learning and teaching through the design, preparation and development of teaching materials and modules, lectures, seminars, and tutorials. In reality, my role was quite specific. I was to teach exclusively in the Law School's legal clinic, the Student Law Office, supervising students as they provided free legal advice to members of the public. I was also part of the small team who managed the office as a fully functional solicitors' practice. This was my first experience working in a university law clinic and supervising undergraduates in their delivery of real legal advice.

Shortly after I arrived in the Student Law Office, I searched the academic literature for supervisory stories. I knew law clinic supervisors had tales to tell. I only had to set one foot out of the door of my office, and I was commandeered in the corridor with accounts of sleepless nights, moans, groans, rolling of eyes, and audible sighs. At the time, I remember reading Guth's (2009) deeply reflexive and eloquent account of life as a new law lecturer. Guth's paper charted her attempts at balancing "teaching, research, administration, training courses and other activities as well as maintaining a meaningful private life" (2009, p. 185). I was convinced there was an equivalent for clinical legal education. I just had to find it.

I found plenty of research telling me how to be an effective supervisor (Hoffman, 1986; Critchlow, 1991; Stark, Bauer, & Papillo, 1993; Evans et al., 2017), to inculcate positive professional relationships with my clinic colleagues (Sage-Jacobson & Leiman, 2014), and to teach my clinic students "well" (Juergens, 1993, p. 339). Frustratingly, however, I struggled to locate personal stories offering "thick description" (Geertz, 1973, p. 10) of a law clinic supervisor's lived experience. Although supervision was consistently positioned as being at the core of clinical legal education (Giddings, 2013; Evans et al., 2017), detailed examples of the reality of being a supervisor were hard to come by.

I was also beginning my own research journey. Sometimes I wonder if I was purposely trying to be rebellious, because I balked against traditional ways of writing research right from the start. Whilst I shaped my work to fit publishers' expectations (I still wanted to be published), I put as much of my voice into my writing as possible. I included narrative where I could. When commenting on technical, legislative matters, I snuck in details of my own experience. I was often annoyed at being asked to remove the introspective elements of my manuscript to make it, in my reviewers' eyes, more scholarly (Campbell, 2016c).

I continued in this vein, pushing against "taken-for-granted formats" (Rambo Ronai, 1995, p. 423) where I could, but with little real understanding of method or methodology. I fell rather lazily into calling all my research 'reflexive', failing to explore in any depth whatsoever what this meant generally or in the context of my work. When I started engaging with the possibility of completing a part-time Professional Doctorate, I was exposed to a whole new world of reflexive methodologies, including, importantly, autoethnography.

Autoethnography is a contemporary methodological approach where the researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to describe and critique lived experience, beliefs, and practices using deep and careful self-reflection (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Adams, Holman Jones, & Ellis, 2015). It is both method and methodology (Reed-Danahay, 1997; Adams et al., 2015). The autoethnographer is the site of the study (Reed-Danahay, 1997), her tale providing a "provocative weave of story and theory" (Spry, 2011, p.713). When researchers do autoethnography, the lone self risks display (Grant, 2010a) and the personal becomes political (Holman Jones, 2005). Autoethnography appealed to me because of its focus on narrative and personal experience. I was also drawn to the way it helped disseminate stories traditionally ignored or distorted (Rodriguez & Ryave, 2002; Bridgens, 2007).

Learning about autoethnography became something of a passion project for me. I consumed autoethnographic studies on my way home from work, sometimes missing my station stop because I was so involved in reading the research. I obsessively plotted the history of autoethnography. I volunteered to speak about autoethnographic practice in staff seminars because I wanted to share the excitement I felt about the methodological possibilities.

Rather than adopting autoethnography wholesale, however, I became engrossed with interrogating its intricacies, limitations, and controversies. Why was there a division between

different genres of autoethnography, and which was ‘right’? Why was guidance on autoethnographic practice “highly abstract” (Wall, 2006, p. 152) and lacking specificity? If I wanted to ‘do’ autoethnography, how might I go about it? Was writing about yourself and others ethical? Was it a problem that my findings would not be generalisable? Would I be accepted in the academy, or derided as “airy fairy” (Labuschagne, 2003)?

When I was given the opportunity to undertake a Professional Doctorate, it dawned on me that I could combine law clinic supervision and autoethnography and make positive contributions to both fields. I could advance our understanding of a key facet of clinical legal education and add to the discourse on autoethnographic practice.

I wanted to know what autoethnography could reveal about my lived experience as a law clinic supervisor. In the 2015/16 academic year, I had my first meeting with my clinic students on 7 October 2015. The students officially left on 28 April 2016 (though many of my students handed in their assessment, and thus left the clinic, earlier). From 7 October 2015 to 12 April 2016, I kept a reflective diary about my supervisory experience that year.

My overarching research question was:

What can autoethnography reveal about my lived experience as a university law clinic supervisor?

My research question was underpinned by the following two objectives:

1. To investigate the rewards, challenges, and limitations of autoethnographic research and writing; and
2. To offer fresh insight into the lived experience of an academic tasked with supervising law students providing legal advice to real clients.

1.2 A brief history of clinical legal education in the United Kingdom

The foundations of clinical legal education can be traced back to the United States during the early twentieth century (Barry, Jon & Joy, 2000; Giddings, Burr ridge, Gavigan & Klein, 2010). In 1917, Rowe wrote a “groundbreaking law review article” (Barry et al., 2000, p. 6) claiming that

law students could not become competent lawyers if their education continued to focus on rules and principles and neglected practical experience. He observed that law lagged behind other disciplines, such as medicine and architecture, already offering students established clinical programmes. In 1933, Frank made a similar comment, comparing law students to “future horticulturists confining their studies to cut flowers” and “architects who study pictures of buildings and nothing else” (p. 912).

In the 1950s the rise in skills-based education paved the way for law clinics in the US law school curriculum (Giddings et al., 2010). At the end of the 1950s, more than one-quarter of accredited law schools provided some sort of clinical education (Giddings et al., 2010). There was, however, a distinct variation in quality (Stevens, 1983; Barry et al., 2000). Supervision, in particular, was a “major problem” (Johnstone, 1951, p. 544). In some clinics, more knowledgeable students were expected to supervise those less experienced (Barry et al., 2000).

Despite the establishment of some nascent clinical offerings, it took the “social ferment” (Schrag & Meltsner, 1998, p. 3) of the 1960s for law clinics to really began to flourish. Buoyed by funding from the Council on Legal Education for Professional Responsibility (CLEPR) and the Ford Foundation, law school *pro bono* projects began to emerge in significant numbers. CLEPR grants were awarded to nearly half of the then-existing law schools within the first few years of its existence. Interestingly, even though the grants were only temporary sources of funding, the resulting clinics were able to take permanent root and continue even when funding ran out (Giddings et al., 2010).

When funding from the Ford Foundation was withdrawn, the US Department for Education stepped in. Their \$87 million spend paved the way for a proliferation of clinics in US law schools between 1978 and 1997 (Joy, 2012). In 2010, the American Bar Association (ABA) began requiring law schools to provide each law student with a minimum of one credit’s worth of experiential education (Joy, 2018). In 2014, this was increased to at least six credit hours (Joy, 2018). In 2019, the *ABA Directory of Law School Public Interest & Pro Bono Programs* lists 212 law schools (American Bar Association, 2019). Nearly every law school recorded has multiple clinics. For example, Albany Law School’s *pro bono* projects include the Access to Legal Information (LawHelp) Project, Albany County Family Court Help Desk, Anti-Human Trafficking Project, Child Custody & Kinship Care Project, Elder Law Project, Immigration Assistance Project, and LGBT Rights Project (American Bar Association, 2019).

In sharp contrast, law schools in the United Kingdom were slow to embrace clinical teaching methods (Kerrigan & Murray, 2011). In the 1970s, some universities and polytechnics provided limited free legal advice to students and the local community (Britton, 1973). However, clinics were fundamentally extra-curricular projects staffed by volunteers. In 1973, the University of Kent was the first to incorporate their law clinic into the curriculum. The University of Warwick followed suit in 1975 (Rees, 1975). Nevertheless, the 1980s and 1990s saw merely a “sporadic development” (Kerrigan & Murray, 2011, p. 10) of clinical legal education in the UK. Even in 1995, despite the establishment of the UK Clinical Legal Education Organisation, only 8 out of seventy-nine universities had a live client clinic (Giddings et al., 2010). Most clinics remained voluntary and non-credit bearing (Kerrigan & Murray, 2011).

Against a backdrop of changes to professional training (see, for example, Ching, Maharg, Sherr & Webb, 2018; Waters, 2018), increasing consumerisation of higher education (Harris, 2005; Wilson & Strevens, 2018), and a rising employability agenda (Alexander, Griffiths, McKee, Nir & Hervey, 2018), the clinical movement flourished in the new millennium. In 2006, LawWorks, a charity supporting *pro bono* provision in England and Wales, commissioned a survey of law school clinics. 35% of the law schools that responded to the survey had a live client clinic (LawWorks, 2006). By the next survey in 2010, the figure had risen to 50% (Grimes & Curtis, 2011). The latest survey, published in 2015, states that at least 70% of law schools have a live client clinic (Carney, Dignan, Grimes, Kelly & Parker, 2014). Although UK university law school clinics are neither as abundant nor as specialised as their US counterparts (Giddings et al., 2010), there is a “rich tapestry” (Kerrigan, 2011, p. 11) of clinical projects taking place today.

1.3 Student Law Office at Northumbria University

1.3.1 History of the Student Law Office

The Student Law Office at Northumbria University is one of the longest running clinical programmes in the UK (Sylvester, Hall & Hall, 2004). In 1981, when the university was still known as Newcastle Polytechnic, a small number of students taking a Legal Methods and Institutions course were offered the opportunity to advise their fellow students. At the time, due to professional practice rules and “a general concern about a possible threat to local solicitors” (Sylvester et al., 2004, p. 40), the clinic and its students could not act for members of the wider community, go on record at court, or apply for legal aid for eligible clients. During the 1980s, the

clinic's contribution was limited and there were difficulties getting an appropriate amount of legal work for the students (Sylvester et al., 2004).

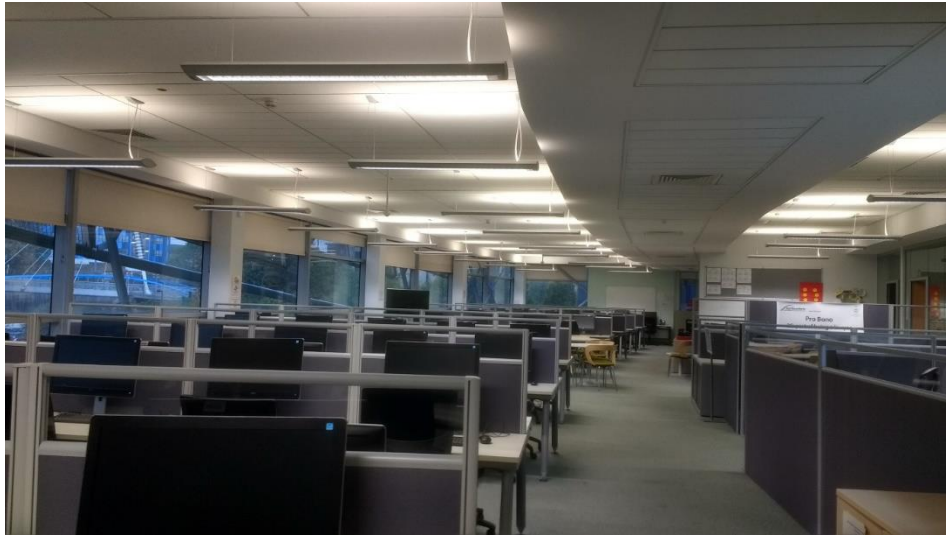
By the 1990s, the clinical movement in the UK started to take shape. Bolstered by the relaxation of the Employed Solicitors Practice Rules - which allowed law students to act for members of the public (Sylvester et al., 2004; James & Woodley, 2005) - the first in-house advice and representation clinics emerged. The Student Law Office was run for credit and contributed to the award gained by students (Hall, 2016). In 1992, Newcastle Polytechnic became the University of Northumbria at Newcastle. In the same year, Northumbria Law School enrolled its first cohort of students on a four-year law degree, combining academic and professional requirements for legal training in one course (Sylvester et al., 2004; Hall, 2016). The Exempting Degree, as it became known, was heralded as a unique response to the recent changes to legal training (Giddings et al., 2010; Jackson & Kerrigan, 2017). The Exempting Degree was eventually renamed the M Law Exempting Degree, with the M confirming the Masters-level attainment on graduation.

1.3.2 Student Law Office layout

The Student Law Office is a large purpose-built office space situated on the first floor of the building Northumbria Law School shares with its Business School colleagues. The office has 5 interview/meetings rooms each with a table, chairs, white board, and state of the art recording equipment. There are over 100 computer stations for students to use. As with any office, there are a number of filing cabinets, photocopiers, printers, and storage areas. The Student Law Office is swipe card access only. Only Student Law Office students and supervisors are granted access.

Administrative staff in the Student Law Office have a distinct area and office space. Many supervisors, including myself, are based on the first-floor corridor across from the Student Law Office and can easily come in and out during the day to see their students and check their case files. Photographs of the Student Law Office from October 2017 are available as **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1 *The Student Law Office, October 2017*



1.3.3 *Student Law Office description, statistics, and awards*

Since records began in 2005, the Student Law Office has managed more than 7,000 enquiries, represented more than 3,000 clients and secured awards worth over £1.5 million on their behalf (Northumbria University, 2018b).

The clinic has won a significant number of prestigious awards and accolades, including the National Training Award 2010 for “outstanding, exemplary, and truly inspirational” (Northumbria University, 2018a) work, the Law Society Excellence Award for Excellence in

Community Investment 2011, Best *Pro Bono* Team at the Halsbury Legal Awards 2013, the Higher Education Academy's inaugural Collaborative Award in Teaching Excellence 2016, and the Access to Justice Foundation Award 2017. In 2013, the Student Law Office was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education. The prize is the highest form of national recognition open to a UK academic or vocational institution and is awarded in recognition of work judged to be of outstanding excellence and with positive impact. It was bestowed on Northumbria University for having: "A university law clinic making a distinctive contribution to the needs of the local community and to legal education" (Northumbria University, 2018a).

1.3.4 *Student Law Office in the 2015-2016 academic year*

My reflective diary covers the period from 7 October 2015 to 12 April 2016 (inclusive). At that time, the Student Law Office was a year-long compulsory module undertaken by all M Law Exempting Degree students in their final year. In the 2015-16 academic year, 185 final year law students worked in the Student Law Office. The clinic received 884 new enquiries and conducted 306 new and existing enquiries. There were 23 supervisors, 2 administrators and 1 trainee solicitor.

Students working in the Student Law Office are typically divided into groups of six which we call 'firms'. Each firm is supervised by a member of Northumbria Law School staff who is also a qualified solicitor, barrister, or caseworker. Firms deal with different legal issues, according to the supervisor's expertise. In 2015-16 there were 23 firms covering civil litigation, elderly law, crime and criminal appeals, employment, housing, welfare benefits, planning, family, and business and commercial.

At the end of the second semester, each student submits a paper-based portfolio of the work they have completed. This is known as the personal file. In the 2015-2016 academic year, the personal file accounted for 70% of a student's mark. The remaining 30% was made up of two 2000-word reflective essays. The Student Law Office module was compulsory for all final year M Law Exempting Degree students and it accounted for almost 40% of a student's final year grade.

1.3.5 *The Student Law Office today*

In 2015, Northumbria Law School validated a new M Law Exempting Degree. Students enrolled onto the new degree in September 2016. The new degree is once again a pioneering four-year course. However, Student Law Office no longer sits in the final year, nor is it compulsory for every student. In their third year, students elect to take either a 20-credit semester long experiential module, or a 60-credit year-long Student Law Office module. Students taking the 60-credit year-long Student Law Office module are not required to complete a dissertation. 20 credit students are. Previously, all students would have completed a dissertation, including my 2015-2016 Student Law Office cohort.

Whilst the fundamental principles of the Student Law Office remain, there are changes to the office space, areas of law covered, and assessment. We have also included, for the first time, policy clinics where students undertake legal research and can be supervised by staff who do not hold practising certificates.

Northumbria Law School and the Student Law Office continue to change with the times. The Exempting Degree is now offered by many law schools throughout the UK. To add to the mix, we are currently in a period of uncertainty as the Solicitors Regulatory Authority seeks to impose a common assessment, known as the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) for all prospective solicitors to take before qualifying. The SQE is a controversial development. Strength of feeling amongst law teachers is high (Guth & Dutton, 2018; D. Jones, 2018; Mason, 2018). Mason (2018), for example, argues that the SQE embodies “a thoroughly impoverished, and indeed largely incoherent, vision of law” (p. 556). There is a wealth of literature on the changes to professional training and the potential impact on law schools and legal clinics and I do not intend to rehearse the arguments here. In the context of this thesis, I merely make the point that legal education continues to evolve, as does Northumbria Law School and its law clinic.

1.4 My background

I graduated from the University of Hull with a First-Class Honours Degree in Law in 2002. Unlike many of my fellow graduates, I had not harboured a longstanding desire to be a lawyer. I wanted to be a teacher. Back in 1999, I had poured over bulky paper university prospectuses in my high

school library, looking at joint honours English and History degrees. Some grumblings about career prospects from various quarters followed. I switched to Law, and that was the end of that.

I lacked any real insight into university life. I had little understanding of UK geography, and applied to random universities without visiting them. I was rejected by all excluding Northumbria University and the University of Hull. I had never been to Hull and did not really know where it was. I chose Hull.

Part way through my second year at the University of Hull, I realised other law students were attempting to get training contracts with solicitors' firms. Once again, I had no idea what this entailed or if it was even what I wanted. I listed my excellent grades and the student prizes I had won on numerous application forms. I used the rejection letters to cover the damp in my student house. Sometimes I got invited to interview at leading law firms. One time, a well-meaning Human Resources director rang me to say that half of the firm's partners liked me, but the other half did not. Had I thought about going to the gym and thinking carefully about the way I dressed? I gave up and, panicked I would return to Newcastle with no income whatsoever, I looked at other options.

On graduation day, I received a telephone call. My application to become a Graduate Tutor in Law at Northumbria University had been successful. The role was new and fixed term for two years. I would earn £8,000 per year and would do some limited teaching in exchange for a free postgraduate course. Very quickly, my involvement in teaching and learning activities became my main focus. I joined a number of module teams; facilitating 2-hour workshops, re-designing module materials, and setting and marking assessments. I provided support to students away from home for the first time, learned to deal sensitively with academic misconduct, and gave one to one guidance when students struggled with legal principles. I loved it.

Towards the end of the fixed term, I got the feeling there might be permanent position for me at Northumbria Law School. However, I had been desperate for some extra cash so had spent a week in the summer holidays working for a corporate law firm. The firm had subsequently offered me the opportunity to train as a solicitor. I was torn. Stay with my colleagues and keep doing the work I loved? Or go and train with a national law firm? My colleagues gave me a superb piece of advice. Go out into the world, they said. Learn more about the profession and how law works in practice. Then bring your knowledge back and use it to enhance your teaching.

So I did. As a company & commercial lawyer, I worked on complex, high value deals requiring resilience and the ability to keep a client calm. I learned that a law firm was a business, and alongside providing advice I also had to build connections. I facilitated networking breakfasts and delivered training throughout the UK. I coached trainee solicitors and paralegals. I stayed at the firm for three years, and then moved to a mid-sized practice where I specialised in assisting start-up enterprises and digital entrepreneurs.

Seven years after I had left Northumbria Law School, I finally returned. This time I was a Solicitor Tutor, working exclusively in the Student Law Office. My brief was to develop the Student Law Office's provision of free advice to businesses. At the time, there were a low number of enquiries and most came from micro-businesses. Under my leadership, the students in our Business & Commercial Law Clinic today represent Small to Medium Enterprises, large cultural venues, nationally recognised brands, and a range of third sector businesses. Enquiries have almost doubled, and the high quality and unique nature of our pedagogic provision is publicised widely through student and staff blogs, social media, and client collaborative marketing (Campbell, 2015b; Campbell, 2016f).

My work in the Student Law Office has been recognised in several institutional and national accolades including in 2016, Law Teacher of the Year. In the same year, I was awarded the National Teaching Fellowship, an internationally-recognised symbol of teaching excellence. I mention this because my role as a law clinic supervisor was at the heart of both awards. I have always been fascinated by the unique characteristics of experiential teaching and my identity as a supervisor has had a major impact on the way in which I approach academic life. In 2017, I was promoted to Associate Professor of Law.

I wanted to be a teacher. I ended up there, eventually. Yet I also had other experiences which remain part of who I am. My seven years in the cut and thrust world of corporate law has left its mark. I had some very difficult times in private practice. I worked demanding hours, took few breaks, and was frequently terrified by my superiors. I have never found a law school colleague crying in the toilet; in private practice this was all too regular. My time as a corporate lawyer has, however, instilled in me a sense of determination, a keen eye for detail, and a fundamental desire for organisation. I never miss a deadline. I turn up early to every occasion (including my own wedding). I am comforted by structure and knowing exactly what is happening when.

All too often our lives are presented as linear; an inevitable route to where we are now. My story could easily be boiled down to law degree, postgraduate study, law firm, and, finally, law teacher. But it's not as simple as that. I hope after reading this section you feel better orientated as to my background and the 'baggage' I bring to this thesis.

1.5 Ontological and epistemological stance

Before I began this Professional Doctorate, I had little understanding of ontology (the study of the nature of reality) and epistemology (the study of the nature of knowledge). The words were alien to me (Hall, 2018). Over time, however, I have come to understand the interconnected nature of my ontological and epistemological position, and their relationship with my methodological choices. In this short section, I explain who I am as a scholar and the research philosophies that have influenced me.

Like Upshaw (2016), I have always had a "love affair" (p. 266) with stories. One of my clearest memories from childhood involves lying in a bed on towels soaked in calamine lotion and listening over and over again to cassette tapes of stories whilst following the accompanying book. I had been on a trip to the seaside with a local charity that supported single parent families. They had not doused me in sun cream as my milky pale, freckled body required, and I had returned home with intense burns and peeling skin. The plastic spools whirled in the cassette player. "Bing! Time to turn the page", came the soothing voice.

Stories transported me into experiences that made me feel as well as think (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a). Much later, when I became an academic, the narrative call remained as strong as ever. Only this time, I was propelled unwittingly towards fulfilling traditional conceptions of social science research, including making "certain and stable" (Adams, et al, 2015, p.10) claims about experiences, reality, and culture, and avoiding bias, affect and emotion. In the positivist tradition, "the world is objective, since it is said to exist independently of the knowers, and it consists of phenomena or events which are orderly and lawful" (Higgs & Trede, 2009, p. 19). This was a problem for me. I accepted "feelings, perceptions and interpretations of a phenomenon" (Higgs & Trede, 2009, p.18) as reality.

In the face of positivist assumptions as to the nature of reality, I also found it hard to move away from accepted approaches to reason, logic and knowledge construction. As Richardson (1990) notes:

“Knowledge is constituted as focused, problem (i.e., hypothesis) centered, linear, straightforward. Other thoughts are extraneous. Inductively accomplished research is to be reported deductively; the argument is to be abstractable in 150 words or less; and researchers are to identify explicitly with a theoretical-methodological label” (p. 17).

And yet, I was (and remain) a legal professional. I have been trained to “think like a lawyer” (Hyams, 2008; E. Jones, 2018) and offer “a seemingly neutral and objective, non-emotive” (E. Jones, 2018, p. 452) analysis of the legal principles in relation to the facts of a case. Whilst I was drawn to narrative as both a mode of reasoning and representation (Richardson, 1990), moving away from objective analysis was a struggle. In particular, I found it hard to reconcile my desire to use narrative as a discovery process (Upshaw, 2016) and my innate need for structure and organisation.

Autoethnographers have been influenced by a number of postmodernist thinkers, including Kuhn (1962) and Rorty (1982). Bochner, for example, explains how his “turn toward narrative” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 35) was provoked by Rorty’s deconstruction of positivist ideals of representation and objectivity. According to Rorty (1982), the notion of truth through “something called ‘the scientific method’” (p. 52) was “neither clear nor useful” (p. 195).

Like Bochner & Ellis (2016), I too find Rorty’s critique of empiricist doctrine “very exciting” (p. 35). However, my view of knowledge construction has been particularly shaped by Lyotard’s (1984) dismissal of grand narratives. For Lyotard, the principle of consensus as a criterion of validation seemed inadequate. He queried why scientists had been “ignored or repressed, sometimes for decades” because their individual stories “too abruptly destabilized” (1984, p. 63) accepted truths. Above all, he was untrusting of metanarratives created by power structures:

“Simplifying to the extreme I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarrative. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences: but that progress in turn presupposes it. To the obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation corresponds, most notably, the crisis of metaphysical philosophy and of the university institution which in the

past relied on it" (Lyotard, 1984, p. xxiv). Above all, I am interested in the power of the individual event. I share Lyotard's distrust of universal 'truths' perpetuated by predominantly white, male, non-disabled, enabled, and privileged perspectives. My goal is to "find language that is adequate to the obscurity and darkness of experience" (Bochner, 2000, p. 270), revel in the diversity of human life stories, and connect my findings to larger cultural conversations.

Nevertheless, I cannot dismiss my commitment to structure and analysis. Accordingly, I have often viewed my reflexive analytical self as comprising two hostile forces. I have found it difficult to, for example, decide whether I am an evocative or analytic autoethnographer (**Chapter 4**), and I have struggled to write a traditional literature review (**Chapter 2**). I have kept the details of my doubts, conflicts, and difficulties in this thesis because I feel it is important to acknowledge that research is not a simple, linear process. Ultimately, however, I have come to find comfort in the thread of systematised creativity that runs throughout my own research practice. I approach this study as a storytelling lawyer, marrying deep reflexivity with structured analysis.

1.6 A note about style

Autoethnography is a methodology of the heart (Pelias, 2004). Although I acknowledge and respect the traditions of the PhD thesis, I have sought to create scholarship that is inescapably tied to the human experience (Richardson, 1990) and opens space for dialogue (Pelias, 2004). In line with my epistemological stance, I have written this thesis in my own voice. Reflexive accounts, complete with emotional expressiveness, weave in and out of the manuscript. Like fellow autoethnographer Chapeskie (2015), I write in the hope the content and findings of my thesis holds up to academic scrutiny *and* remain accessible to scholars interested in the use and application of this material in practice.

1.7 Thesis organisation

I have organised this thesis in the way I think best suits a study that has creativity and reflexivity at its heart but still seeks to sustain confidence in the quality of its scholarship (Stahlke Wall, 2016). This thesis is divided into seven chapters.

Chapter 1

In this introductory chapter, I have provided the context and rationale for this study, including my guiding research question and underlying objectives. I have outlined the history of clinical legal education in the United Kingdom, focusing specifically on my in-house university law clinic the Student Law Office at Northumbria University. To give a sense of who I am and why this study has resonance for me, I delved into my background and reflected on my career to date. From this, I explored my epistemological stance and introduced the conceptual frameworks that influenced my view of knowledge construction.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provides a review of the autoethnographic scholarship relevant to this study. Unlike other literature reviews I have read, however, I have started from the beginning and provided the story of how I discovered and went on to search for autoethnography. In many ways, Chapter 2 is an autoethnographic account of finding autoethnography. Through my narrative I:

- explain how and why I abandoned an initial systematic search and went on to embrace systematised creativity;
- trace the history of autoethnography from the 1970s to present day;
- identify the writers who have influenced my understanding of autoethnography, and whose work I continue to be drawn to;
- explore the rapid growth of autoethnographies located in higher education; and
- briefly reflect on autoethnography as a process of revealing secrets and sense making.

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, I provide a guide to the literature on in-house university law clinic supervision and its shortcomings. I map what is currently known about in-house law clinic supervisory experiences and the methods used to capture data. I identify key knowledge gaps in the literature, including the manifestation of the supervisory role and its impact, emotionally, on supervisors. Finally, I reflect on the causal factors behind the paucity of research on law clinic supervision using contemporary reflexive methodologies.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 is concerned with the methodology used for this study. In it, I provide details of the research design, data generation, and method of analysis. I also respond to criticism of autoethnography and reflect on autoethnography's ability to give voice to hidden narratives and perspectives, including my own.

Driven by the dearth of detailed material on 'doing' autoethnography, I use this chapter to explain in considerable detail how I used (a) a reflective diary to capture my data, and (b) thematic analysis to analyse its content. Accordingly, Chapter 4 is the largest of all the chapters in this thesis. However, I have endeavoured to make it as accessible as possible by utilising micro-autoethnographic accounts (Collins, 2015) and visuals to represent the process I went through.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, I critically examine autoethnographic ethics. I discuss the ethics of writing about intimate others and justify my position as an autoethnographer seeking to be ethical in her research. Importantly, I also explore and make the case for the need for self-care in autoethnographic work.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 provides a detailed analysis of my research findings, reflects on the contribution this thesis makes to clinical legal education and autoethnography, and makes practical recommendations for the benefit of new and experienced law clinic supervisors.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 is a short chapter, comprising some concluding remarks. First, I acknowledge the limitations of this study. Secondly, I make suggestions for future research. Finally, the chapter, and this thesis, concludes with my personal reflections on the process of conducting this research and writing this manuscript.

Chapter 2 DISCOVERING, SEARCHING FOR, AND REVIEWING AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is unlike traditional literature reviews you may have read before. At first, I created what I thought a literature review should look like. A ‘traditional’ literature review, if you will. I found myself stumbling at every sentence and utterly frustrated. The writing was impersonal and staid. The rich experience was hidden or, worse, lost.

By attempting to conform to expectations, I produced a chapter that failed to align with the creativity and reflexivity flowing throughout this thesis. More importantly, the draft chapter also neglected to accurately depict my intuitive approach to reviewing the literature. I started again. This (re-written) chapter is the authentic story of my journey through the autoethnographic literature.

The story starts with my discovery of autoethnography. I have noticed that the very early stages of the research process are often dealt with fleetingly. For me, finding autoethnography was an integral component of my study. Writing autoethnographically about coming to autoethnography, I think, helps to share a deeper understanding of the experience of discovering a new methodology.

The story continues with an examination of my intuitive approach to literature search. I discuss a (failed) initial systematic search. I justify the use of systematised creativity as a method of searching. The remainder of the story comprises a review of autoethnographic work of relevance to this study. First, I provide a brief history of autoethnography, surveying the landscape from 1970 to the present day. Secondly, I explore the rise of autoethnography located in higher education generally and discuss the dearth of autoethnography in clinical legal education. Finally, I review literature that uses autoethnography (a) to reveal secrets, and (b) as a sensemaking process.

2.2 Discovering autoethnography

On an October afternoon in 2014, I was standing in the corridor outside my office catching up

with my research mentor. I had just received feedback on my latest article, a reflexive account of an aspect of my teaching practice. The feedback suggested my approach was not sufficiently scholarly. I was having a hard time marrying the critique with my desire to produce introspective, reflective work. I relayed the news to my mentor. She nodded, and then said four words that have come to change my professional and personal life: 'You might like autoethnography'.

If an event's importance is signified by the number of times it is mentioned, then the brief conversation with my research mentor must be a seminal moment. I have referred to it in every lecture, workshop, and staff seminar about autoethnography I have delivered (Campbell, 2015a, 2016a, 2016e), two articles (Campbell, 2016c, 2017a), a guest blog for the British Educational Research Association (Campbell, 2016b), and my 2016 National Teaching Fellowship application.

Later that evening, alone in my house, I kept myself busy doing household chores. Eventually, I made my way to my kitchen. It was a small room, attached to my living area, containing a mini-fridge, washing machine, sink, hob, microwave and not much else. I placed my iPad on a stretch of spare worktop as I tidied up. I remember the darkness outside. The fluorescent under-cupboard lights shone down encasing the room in a fuzzy glow. I recall with some disgust how the kitchen surfaces remained sticky, despite my valiant cleaning attempts. My newly rented home, covered in an ingrained layer of frying oil created by its previous occupants.

I had not forgotten about autoethnography. In the glow, I brought up the Google homepage on my iPad and typed 'autoethnography' into the search bar. Near the top of the results, I spotted a YouTube video (Ellis & Bochner, 2014). I decided it would be easier to listen to a lecture rather than try and read as I made my way around the house completing one domestic task after another.

As the video began, I saw two faces. The YouTube notes identified the speakers as Professor Art Buchner [sic] and Professor Carolyn Ellis. Ellis' lively American "Hello from Tampa, Florida!" (Ellis & Bochner, 2014) bellowed out around my house. Immediately, the tone was different. Bochner talked of "a deep sense of loss" (Ellis & Bochner, 2014) that he and Ellis faced a camera rather than being present at the Israeli Center for Qualitative Research of People and Societies Conference. This emotional, personal language seemed far away from the norms of academic speech.

Ellis and Bochner accompanied me as I heaved the vacuum cleaner up the stairs, as I untangled jewellery on the bed, and as I ironed and put away clothes. They spoke of research as storytelling; the sort of storytelling that would “evoke readers to enter [your] experiences and feel what [you] felt” (Ellis & Bochner, 2014). I remained silent, taking it all in. Together, Ellis and Bochner argued for the researcher’s personal experience, emotions and interactions to be the centre of the narrative. Throughout the video, as though to demonstrate this approach, they told stories of their professional and personal lives.

At the end of the 52-minute 10-second video, I drew a bath. I placed the iPad precariously on the top of the cheap plastic toilet seat opposite, got undressed, and stepped into the bath. I reached over and pressed play again. I was enthralled. The rest of the evening I trawled YouTube watching other videos and consuming all I could about autoethnography. The next morning I knew that I could explain the fundamental principles behind autoethnography. I understood that autoethnographic research blended autobiography with ethnography and was designed to give voice to individual experience (Ellis et al., 2011; Ellis & Bochner, 2014; Adams et al., 2015). I was keen to know more.

A few days later, I collected a copy of Etherington’s (2004) *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher: Using Our Selves in Research*. My mentor had recommended Etherington’s work following our discussion about autoethnography. I wonder if I was incredibly busy then because the book remained on my desk for five months, picked up and skim read during moments of calm but ultimately dismissed. If I made notes at the time, they are nowhere to be found. Nearly three years later during the process of writing this chapter, I went back to the book and was dismayed by my treatment of it. I had read the chapters on the tenets of autoethnography and keeping a reflective journal, so obviously salient now to this doctoral work. Yet I had failed to recognise the relevance of Etherington’s work to my own. Perhaps I was still in the process of working out what I was doing. I was not yet enrolled on a doctoral programme and had no idea how my relationship with autoethnography would eventually unfold.

In any event, Etherington’s (2004) book remains an important catalyst in my journey toward autoethnographic practice. Back when I first picked it up, I had photocopied the reference list and highlighted a number of texts I wanted to read. Working my way through the list, I discovered most of the papers of interest were not in my university’s library collection. The only book I was able to access at that time was Ellis & Flaherty’s (1992) *Investigating Subjectivity:*

Research on Lived Experience. The book was located at another campus. I reserved it.

When I eventually received an email telling me to go pick Ellis & Flaherty's (1992) book up from the university library, I decided to do so on my way home. It was dark and windy when I half-ran up the steps to the revolving library doors. A quick swipe of my staff card, the push of a cold metal turnstile, and I was in. At the reservations stand, I scanned the rows for "C" and then tilted my head to the left so I could read the white slips of paper peeping out of the books, looking for "Campbell" (my surname at the time). When I finally found the right book, I grimaced at its dog-eared appearance and pushed it hastily into my bag.

I captured my experience reading *Investigating Subjectivity: Research on Lived Experience* in the following vignette, published in 2016:

"Vignette 1: I meet Alice and Ted"

I stand on a crowded Metro train, heading home from work. Almost immediately, I find refuge in part of the carriage that divides the two seating areas. Here there is only space for a few people to stand and, out of politeness, most avoid. I am safe in this space. I greedily retrieve my latest autoethnography book from the bottom of my bag. It is battered and bruised. Pages are coming out at the back; the experienced life of a university library book. I pause for a moment to consider how many people have flicked through this book before me, how many children have put it in their mouths, and how many bags it has rested in on other journeys to someone's home. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it.

I find the chapter I want to read. It is an abortion narrative. Performed by 'Alice' and 'Ted', the authors speak to the audience and to each other. This is Carolyn Ellis & Art Bochner's story—their lived experience of an unwanted pregnancy 10 weeks into their relationship. As the fear, joy, confusion, resignation, anger, and numbness spills from the page, I am living the experience with them. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it.

As the story reaches its crescendo and Alice is entering the hospital, I start to feel sick. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it. I feel lightheaded. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it. I feel a dull ache in my stomach. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it. I find a seat and take deep breaths. I send a WhatsApp message to my partner,

telling him it's the closest I've ever come to passing out" (Campbell, 2016c, p. 95).

Reading Ellis & Bochner's account of the termination of their pregnancy was a visceral experience (Campbell, 2016c). I was with the authors as they twisted and turned through their decision to terminate their pregnancy. I was there as they entered the hospital. I felt the conflicting emotions and physical pain. In the end, I was so overcome that I had to find a seat on the train in order to feel better. Ellis has said the goal was to "lead readers through a journey in which they have an experiential sense of the events and know what it must have felt like" (Ellis & Bochner, 1992, p. 80). In me, her ambition was realised (Campbell, 2017a).

2.3 Searching for more autoethnography

2.3.1 Initial systematic search

My interest in autoethnography piqued, I was determined to find more. Several doctoral students in my Faculty were undertaking systematic literature reviews. I was enticed by the notion of a methodical, repeatable technique to locate and appraise vast swathes of research. The idea of systematising my search process appealed to my corporate lawyer's appetite for structure and organisation.

Sensing I needed further guidance before I embarked on a systematic review, I attended a library training session on systematic searching. I was introduced to freely accessible databases and invited to identify appropriate search terms and relevant synonyms for my research. I wrote a list on the back of the handout I had been given and walked briskly back to my office, eager to test the words out.

Sitting at my desk, I readied myself to complete the first round of my systematic review of the literature. The databases I chose were Web of Science, HeinOnline, Westlaw, and LexisNexis. Westlaw and LexisNexis are legal databases, providing information on legal cases, precedents, legislation, and associated commentary. Initially, I thought about discarding the legal databases from the search. However, I wanted to ensure I captured any reference to autoethnography (however small) in relation to legal education.

I began by searching for the word 'autoethnography' in each database. I wanted to establish how

many articles about autoethnography were listed. My intention was then to use boolean operators and linking phrases (e.g. “autoethno* AND clinic*; “autoethno* AND “education””) to limit my search to autoethnographic research into clinical legal education. **Table 2.1** shows the results of my initial search.

Table 2.1 *Results of my initial systematic search*

Database	Search term	Results
Web of Science	Autoethnography	70 articles
LexisNexis	Autoethnography	0 articles
WestLaw	Autoethnography	0 articles
HeinOnline	autoethno*	52 articles

I was confused with the limited results emerging from the ‘autoethnography’ search in Web of Science, Westlaw, and LexisNexis. I knew there were more than 70 articles containing the word autoethnography in existence. When I logged into HeinOnline, I changed the search term to ‘autoethno*’. Broadening the search term in this way would capture alternatives to autoethnography, such as ‘autoethnographic’ or ‘autoethnographical’. However, even with the wider search, only 52 articles were listed in HeinOnline. Together, the results returned 122 articles. None of the articles listed referred to clinical education, let alone clinical *legal* education. Where an article touched on education, the focus was on the researcher’s experience of being a student (typically through the lens of race, gender or disability), not the lived experience of being an educator.

2.3.2 *Abductive approach to literature review*

I was frustrated by the search results. I knew they did not reflect the quantity of scholarly work on autoethnography in existence. I was already reading a minimum of two articles on autoethnography per day. Each piece of autoethnographic research led me to another, and another. I had rapidly accumulated a significant number of electronic and paper copies of articles and book chapters.

I soon abandoned my systematic search. Instead, I continued to make choices based on the knowledge I sought. I designed a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to store and organise details of

the literature I read. The spreadsheet contained 15 columns, which evolved over time. Alongside bibliographic detail, I used the spreadsheet to capture my analysis of the arguments. **Figure 2.1** is a screenshot of part of the spreadsheet.

As an electronic document, the spreadsheet also allowed for automatic organisation. For example, a simple A-Z configuration of the 'Journal Title' column immediately showed the preponderance (or not) of a particular journal. Similarly, I could quickly organise the data by author or year.

As my database expanded, I kept a master sheet showing all of the literature, and also created multiple sheets dividing the literature into topics. In May 2016, I wrote a blog post detailing how I used Microsoft Excel to manage my literature review (Campbell, 2016d). With over 20,000 views, it is one of my most popular posts to date. I am frequently contacted by researchers requesting a copy of my template.

Figure 2.1 Screenshot of Microsoft Excel literature review spreadsheet

Author	Year	Title	Book Editor	Book Title	Journal Title	Journal Volume	Keywords	Objective	Conclusions
Pillow, Wanda	2003	Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research						Four reflexive strategies (as recognition of self, as recognition of other, as truth, as transcendence) work together to provide the researcher with a form of self-reflexivity as confession that often yields a catharsis of self-awareness...which provides a cure for the problem of doing representation" (181) "I argue that using reflexivity to write toward the familiar works against the critical impetus of reflexivity and thus masks continued reliance upon traditional notions of validity, truth, and essence in qual research" (180)	Argument is: don't stop being reflective just alter how. Need to be rigorously self aware" (180), reflexivity vs against parameters of comfortable research" (181) discomfort (188)
Pinnegar, Stefanie & Hamilton, Mary Lynn	2011	Narrating the tensions of teacher educator research in moving story to research			Advances in Research on Teaching	13, 43-68	teaching; narrative research;	"As teacher educator researchers, we always stand in the midst in the midst of the story where we may be simultaneously narrator, character, and actor, in the midst of living the research we are most interested in studying" (44)	Looks back at quotation from previously published v noting how it has moved from story to research, "My research require that we treat what we are studying as can know completely" (50). Experienced several people telling her not to share it harmful for career, not taken seriously (402); at certa tells more and then more and expose private secret t reader; "In the face of tradition, it is difficult for socio taken-for-granted formats for communication in the (429)
Rambo Rinal, Carol	1995	Multiple Reflections of Child Sex Abuse: An Argument for a Layered Account			Journal of Contemporary Ethnography	23	sex abuse; parent; autoethnography; layered account; systematic sociological introspection		
Rambo Rinal, Carol	1997	On Loving and Hating My Mentally Retarded Mother			Mental Retardation	35(6), 417-432	sex abuse; parent; autoethnography; layered account	"This article explores why I love and hate my mother" (417)	
Rappert, Brian	2010	Revealing and concealing secrets in research: the potential for the absent			Qualitative Research	10(5), 571-587	autoethnography	Chapters in the book were paper presentations in 1995 American Anthropological Association panel - a young woman in the audience asked how she could convince her thesis committee that doing narrative research was a "worthwhile pursuit". RD reflects on how even author in the book.	The AE-er as having a dual identity: "the AE-er is a bc that dualistic view may be "better substituted with on shifting identities" (3) "Double identity and insider/ou too simplistic for an adequate understanding of the p representation and power" (4).
Reed-Danahay, Deborah	1997		Reed-Danahay, Deborah	AutoEthnograph y: Rewriting the Self and the Social (p.1-20: Introduction)					

My approach to literature searching could be characterised as intuitive research, using a process

of systematised creativity (Andreewsky & Bourcier, 2000; Taylor, Fisher & Dufresne, 2002), both of which are features of an abductive approach to reasoning. Abduction is closely linked with Peirce (1877). He concluded that there were three branches of logic, or three classification of arguments (de Waal, 2013): deduction, induction, and abduction. Deduction and induction are well-known phrases in research methods, but abduction is less familiar. In *Peirce: A Guide for the Perplexed*, de Waal (2013) explains Peirce's construction of the abductive approach using the example of Kepler's discovery of the orbit of the Mars. Peirce argued that Kepler's reasoning involved accepting (the Copernican heliocentric view), realising (that the sun's size may be a factor), finding (when the sun is made a fixed point of reference, descriptions of Mars' motion are simpler), and rejecting (the long-held belief of circular orbits) (de Waal, 2013). Whilst Kepler drew on existing precise and measured observations of stars and planets, he also used conjecture and "educated guesses" (de Waal, 2013, p. 64). An educated guess, according to de Waal (2013), is not merely a shot in the dark, but rather a conscious process "according to some general habit, or method, which is such that tends to lead us to rational explanations, and hence to the truth" (p. 64-65).

I was drawn to an abductive approach because of its focus on interpretation and the notion of using an intuitive leap. I found references to abductive literature review in fields as wide-ranging as cybernetics (Andreewsky & Bourcier, 2000) and management learning (Taylor et al., 2002). Interestingly, both Andreewsky & Bourcier (2000) and Taylor et al's (2002) work - seemingly adrift from each other - describe an abductive approach using language I associate with autoethnography. For example, in Andreewsky & Bourcier (2000) abduction is described as "a variety of cognitive paradigms - such as the *"auto"* ones" (*emphasis added*, p. 837). Taylor et al (2002) go on to argue that:

"aesthetic felt meaning bypasses conscious critical filters that individuals may apply to information as they try to make sense of events for themselves. Although some individuals may reflect on the felt meaning and question it over time, there is a tendency to trust the intuitively grasped felt meaning because it is based in feelings – it feels right" (p. 316).

There are three reasons why an abductive approach works in the context of this doctorate. First, it makes sense that someone with my epistemological stance would review the literature this way. My blog post of 3 December 2014 clearly demonstrates that a felt meaning (Taylor et al., 2002) perspective to literature review is part of who I am as a researcher:

“To date, for all the conference papers I’ve prepared and articles I’ve written I have felt my way through the literature. I’ve found one article or book and when the author has referenced something which sounds interesting I go and have a read of that. Repeat process. I mostly go off footnotes or bibliographies, picking the titles I like the look of.

Like a detective novel you can’t put down, one clue leads to another and another and another. The feeling of discovery can make the process quite thrilling.

Imagine the literature is a cake. I’m not looking down at the cake, admiring the decorative icing and marveling at the beautiful layers. My face is firmly planted right in the middle and I’m chomping away” (Campbell, 2014).

Secondly, a “creative dimension of understanding” (Andreewsky & Bourcier, 2000, p. 840) is a thread that runs throughout this doctoral work. I have approached all aspects of doctoral study, from literature review to analysis, in the same way: structured creativity and reflexivity.

Finally, on a practical level, I have not always been able to access autoethnographic research. I have a folder of responses to inter-library loan requests which say ‘despite an extensive search for your inter-library loan, we are unable to find a supplier who is able to lend’ or ‘the item you requested is not available for loan in the UK’. I find myself in the peculiar position of being unable to access my own article published in *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research* (Campbell, 2017b) because my institution does not have electronic or paper access to the journal and all inter-library loan requests have been cancelled due to lack of availability in the United Kingdom. If I were to follow a purely systematic approach, I would simply note the lack of availability and move on. However, with my abductive approach if I have not been able to access a particular article I have instead explored other works by the same author. I have been able to build a picture of authors’ viewpoints and arguments which have informed my reading.

2.4 A brief history of autoethnography

2.4.1 Researching the history of autoethnography

My understanding of the history of autoethnography comes primarily from Ellis, writing alone (2004) or with others (Ellis et al., 2011; Adams et al., 2015; Bochner & Ellis, 2016). Ellis was (and

continues to be) at the heart of the modern autoethnographic movement. Accordingly, it makes sense that it is she who provides the most detailed commentary on autoethnography's background.

My reliance on Ellis's narrative has given me some cause for concern, especially given Ellis's own admission that there is no comprehensive history (Ellis, 2004; Bochner & Ellis, 2016). My apprehension has, however, been lessened due to the inaccuracies and misquotes I have found in other works purporting to provide a history of autoethnography. For example, Frandsen (2015), referencing Anderson (2006a), states that the number of autoethnographic studies has increased over 50 years. In fact, Anderson (2006a) reports an "impressive growth" in autoethnography "over the past *fifteen years*" (*emphasis added*, p. 373). I do not include this here to call out a fellow scholar. We all make errors. Nevertheless, this example shows that when you are not there, and you are working third hand, details can be misconstrued and inaccuracies can occur. With this in mind, I feel justified relying heavily on Ellis' remembrances. Ellis was there, and she is consistent in her reporting of the events that led to the emergence of autoethnography.

2.4.2 Autoethnography in the 1970s

The 1970s were characterised by a lack of narrative research. Seen as a "niche product" (Abbott, 2007, p. 69), research utilising the personal experience of individuals was written by "only a few conservative historians and [...] a handful of social scientists rebelling against the casual orthodoxies of their disciplines" (Abbott, 2007, p. 69). Rigorous quantitative analysis was the order of the day (Abbott, 2007).

Ellis (2004) draws on artefacts from her past to evidence how researchers were explicitly encouraged to rid their work of any trace of subjectivity or personal view. Her ragged, smudged handout from a 1975 graduate class stated: "Ideally one's field notes should be such that an independent reader could take them and arrive at the same inferences and explanations as oneself" (2004, pp. 15-16). Exploration of the researcher's experience was not viewed as a "legitimate" (Ellis, 2004, p. 15) path to pursue, not in published research at least.

It is, however, "far too easy – and misleading" (Atkinson, 2006, p. 400) to make sweeping generalisations and ascribe an absence of reflexivity to earlier generations of researchers and

their research. Exceptions do exist. A notable example is Wallace's (1972) brief but interesting examination of a typical day at the office. Wallace (1972) justifies his reflective approach to anthropological research by making the point that "in the field neither interviewing nor participant observation is quite enough. One needs not merely to question, observe, and imitate; one needs to be able to feel that one has done a similar thing "for real" back home" (p. 195).

During her early ethnographic work in the 1970s, Ellis lived in isolated fishing villages in the United States where she examined social organisation, family structure, and working practices in the community (Ellis, 1984; Ellis 2004; Bochner & Ellis, 2016). She did not maintain a position as a neutral observer as per the instructions in her graduate class handout. Instead, she became "attuned" to how much she was learning about the individuals she interacted with "through considering [her] own thoughts, feelings, and actions" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 26). Although this reflective work did not explicitly make its way into her writing, Ellis later wrote that she did "sneak" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 26) herself into vignettes as a minor character. The vignettes represented an initial move into writing narratively, using storytelling to capture the lives of the fisher folk. Ellis notes, however, that she did not have a term for what she was doing (Bochner & Ellis, 2016).

2.4.3 Autoethnography in the 1980s

In the 1980s, Ellis suffered a double-tragedy. Her 29 year old brother Rex died in an airplane crash in 1982, on his way to visit her (Ellis, 2004; Bochner & Ellis, 2016). Three years later, she lost her partner Gene Weinstein to chronic emphysema (Ellis, 1995, 2004). Already an established ethnographer (Ellis, 1986), Ellis was influenced by Weinstein's position as a Symbolic Interactionist, or, she puts it, "an experimental social psychologist who conducted laboratory experiments on social interactions, rather than an ethnographer" (Ellis, 2004, p. 17). She began keeping daily fieldnotes about Weinstein during the last year of his life (Ellis, 2004). The content of Ellis' notes included her thoughts and feelings, conversations with Weinstein, and daily descriptions of events (Ellis, 2004).

After Weinstein's death in 1985, Ellis began to write narratively about her personal experiences with loss and grief. She considered her fieldnotes about Weinstein to be full of "insightful sociology about illness processes, relational dynamics, and coping strategies" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 28). She began to write *Final Negotiations*, the story of their lives during his progressive

illness, bringing together literature and sociology in what Ellis called “experimental ethnography” (Ellis, 1995, p. 3). At the same time, Ellis became associated with the Society for Symbolic Interaction, attending the annual symposium at University of Illinois hosted by Norman Denzin in 1985 (Ellis, 2004). For Symbolic Interactionists, “the emphasis was on taking on the role of the other, getting in the head - and later heart and body - of the person acting back to culture” (Ellis, 2004, p. 17). She also tried to find a home for her initial work exploring lived experience in the American Sociological Association, starting a section on Sociology of Emotions (Ellis, 2004). However, the traditional view of research - “theorizing, counting, and predicting” (Ellis, 2004, p. 20) - still prevailed. Ultimately, Ellis felt Communication Studies offered greater opportunities for the interpretivist and creative work she was engaged in (Ellis, 2004).

An influx of new voices bringing together literature and social science and generally questioning accepted perspectives on writing, method and representation emerged (Ellis & Bochner, 2014). Some of the most venerated notions of scientific truth and knowledge were contested by the likes of Rorty (1982), Lyotard (1984), and Clifford & Marcus (1986). Researchers in anthropology, sociology, communication, and feminism began “writing and advocating for personal narrative, subjectivity, and reflexivity in research” (Adams et al., 2015, p. 16). This period has since become known as the Crisis of Representation (Marcus & Fischer, 1999; Ellis et al., 2011). Marcus & Fischer (1999) describe the crisis as “pervasive” (p. 7), with challenges to empirical research appearing in law, art, philosophy, literature, neoclassical economics, natural sciences, and mathematics. They declared the period to be “rich in experimentation and conceptual risk-taking” (1999, p.10) where dominant structures were “suspended” (1999, p.10).

Tempting as it is to indulge in a romantic depiction of the mid 1980s, scholars inclined towards reflexive experimentation did not necessarily encounter open doors. Research methods texts were still wedded to quantitative methods, with a significant number of chapters on surveys and experiments (Bryman, 1988). Even participant observation was afforded little attention due to its “inability to conform to the canons of scientific method” (Bryman, 1988, p. 1). If the dominant structures were ever suspended, this was fleeting.

2.4.4 *Autoethnography in the 1990s*

In the 1980s, Bochner had become increasingly less interested in the generalisations of

traditional research. Influenced by Rorty (1982) and Bruner (1986), he concluded that the human sciences needed “texts that bear witness to that which they communicate and which can deeply implicate the reader” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 36). He and Ellis met in 1990 when they were both at University of South Florida. The following textual performance depicts their first encounter:

“Carolyn: Right away our personal and work lives intersected. We met when Art attended a talk I gave in the Business School on systematic sociological introspection, which focussed largely on the book, Final Negotiations (1995a), I was writing about coping with my partner Gene’s dying and death.

...

Carolyn: I recall being a little nervous because I didn’t recognise many people in the audience and I wasn’t sure how interested folks in a business school would be in my talk. But I’d given a number of presentations on introspection before, so I took a deep breath and started talking.

Art: The first thing I noticed was Carolyn’s magnetic energy, which made me feel as if I were being pulled across the room toward her. The talk felt more like a dance than a lecture. I was smitten.

[Carolyn and Art turn and speak directly to each other]

Carolyn: But you didn’t sound smitten when you started drilling me with questions during the Q&A. You started by praising me, but then you told me how defensive I sounded.

Art: I have to admit that some of my comments were devious. I wanted to get your attention. I loved how you were arguing for a social science that embodied emotionality and subjectivity. I even whispered to one of my students, Hey, she’s giving my lecture” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, pp. 36-42).

Soon after their meeting, Ellis and Bochner began a professional and personal relationship which continues to this day. Bochner recalls that he had “waited so long for someone who shared my vision of what was possible” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 40). They began exchanging publications and work in progress “virtually from the first day” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 40), presenting their first co-constructed narrative at a conference the same year. They married in 1995.

The 1990s represented a fertile period of growth for experimental narratives. In 1992, Ellis & Flaherty edited *Investigating Subjectivity: Research on Lived Experience*, a collection focussing on lived experience research. The collection included authors who would later become prolific contributors to the autoethnographic movement (see, for example, Rambo Ronai, 1992). Elsewhere, the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* included, for the first time, a chapter dedicated

to “Personal Experience Methods” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). Nevertheless, researchers inclined towards narrative and personal experience were not yet applying the term 'autoethnography' to their work.

The genesis of the term 'autoethnography' can be traced back to Heider (1975) who used 'autoethnography' to describe the way in which members of a culture could give accounts of their own experiences. Two years later, Hayano (1979) described the phenomenon of ethnographers doing "ethnographies of their 'own people'" (p. 99) as autoethnography. Hayano first heard the word in Sir Raymond Firth's 1966 structuralism seminar at the London School of Economics (Hayano, 1979). Firth was himself recalling a debate some 30 years earlier in Malinowski's (1967) seminar, in an argument that “pointedly raised the question of judging the validity of anthropological data by accessing the characteristics, interests, and origin of the person who did the fieldwork” (Hayano, 1979, p. 100). Heider (1975) and Hayano (1979) brought autoethnography into the research lexicon, but its use still perpetuated the separation of researcher and researched. Autoethnography was, at this time, predominantly thought of as ethnography about your own people, not ethnography about yourself.

In 1995, a decade after Gene's death, Ellis finally published *Final Negotiations*. The title is an explicit reference to Ellis's experiences with love, loss, death, and grief. However, it might also be an allusion as to her state of mind as she prepared to publish a highly personal account of a major part of her life. Ellis' fieldnotes, included in the book, revealed a dream about publicly reading an extract of *Final Negotiations*. She opens her folder, ready to read aloud, but the draft - the only copy of the perfect, final draft - has disappeared. Ellis told Bochner about the dream. He said it was “time to be finished with the book” (Ellis, 1995, p. 336). Importantly, Ellis negated to call *Final Negotiations* autoethnography, preferring at the time to classify her research as experimental ethnography (Ellis, 1995) or introspective/ethnographic novel (Ellis, 1995). Whilst Ellis references Hayano (1979) in passing, autoethnography does not appear in *Final Negotiations*' index.

A year later, however, in the editor's biography for *Composing Ethnography*, Ellis's work is referred to as autoethnographic (Ellis & Bochner, 1996b). Part 1 of *Composing Ethnography* is called "Autoethnography" and the word occurs repeatedly throughout the chapters in the book. In 1997, Reed-Danahay's seminal work *Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social* put autoethnography front and centre. Reed-Danahay (1997) also provided the much-used

definition of autoethnography: "a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context. It is both a method and a text, as in the case of ethnography" (p. 9). Autoethnography was reborn as a method and methodology with the self at its core.

2.4.5 Autoethnography in the 2000s to present day

Despite the emergence of autoethnography in the 1990s, autoethnographic publications remained scarce. In 1999, Bochner & Ellis conducted a search for scholarly articles or chapters directly focussing on autoethnography. They found fewer than 40 (Bochner & Ellis, 2016). Muncey (2010) had a similar experience. While preparing to write her book *Creating Autoethnographies*, Muncey (2010) maintained a link to publications listed on Web of Science for the keyword 'autoethnography'. Between 1990 and 2002, her list did not rise above 5 items (Muncey, 2010).

Happily, the new millennium brought a swell of autoethnographic research. The statistics make for interesting reading. After 2003, a minimum of 35 items appeared on Muncey's (2010) list each year. In April 2017, my own Google Scholar search for 'autoethnography' revealed 28,400 results. I repeated the search on 18 January 2019 and received 38,500 results.

Numbers can only tell us so much. For me, the establishment of autoethnography as a contemporary qualitative methodology in the 2000s was demonstrated in several ways. Autoethnography was increasingly represented in *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (see, for example, Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Ellis & Bochner, 2003; Holman Jones, 2005), a volume representing the state of the art for the theory and practice of qualitative research. Respected journals like *Qualitative Inquiry* published a wide range of autoethnographic works (see, for example, Spry, 2001; Pelias, 2003; Humphreys, 2005). Methodological textbooks about autoethnography emerged in quick succession (see, for example, Ellis, 2004; Chang, 2008; Muncey, 2010; Adams et al., 2015; Bochner & Ellis, 2016).

Autoethnography conferences have also appeared. *Doing Autoethnography* was established in 2011 at San Angelo, Texas (Bolen, 2016). Closer to home, the *British Autoethnography Conference* commenced in 2014 at the University of Brighton (Grant, 2014), and was subsequently held at the University of Aberdeen in 2015 and 2016 (Woodley, 2015; British Autoethnography, 2016), and the University of Sussex in 2017 (Barnes, Hayler, & Wignall, 2017). In 2017, the papers listed

under the Autoethnography Special Interest Group at the *International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry* ran to 29 pages (Denzin, 2017).

2.5 Academic autoethnographies

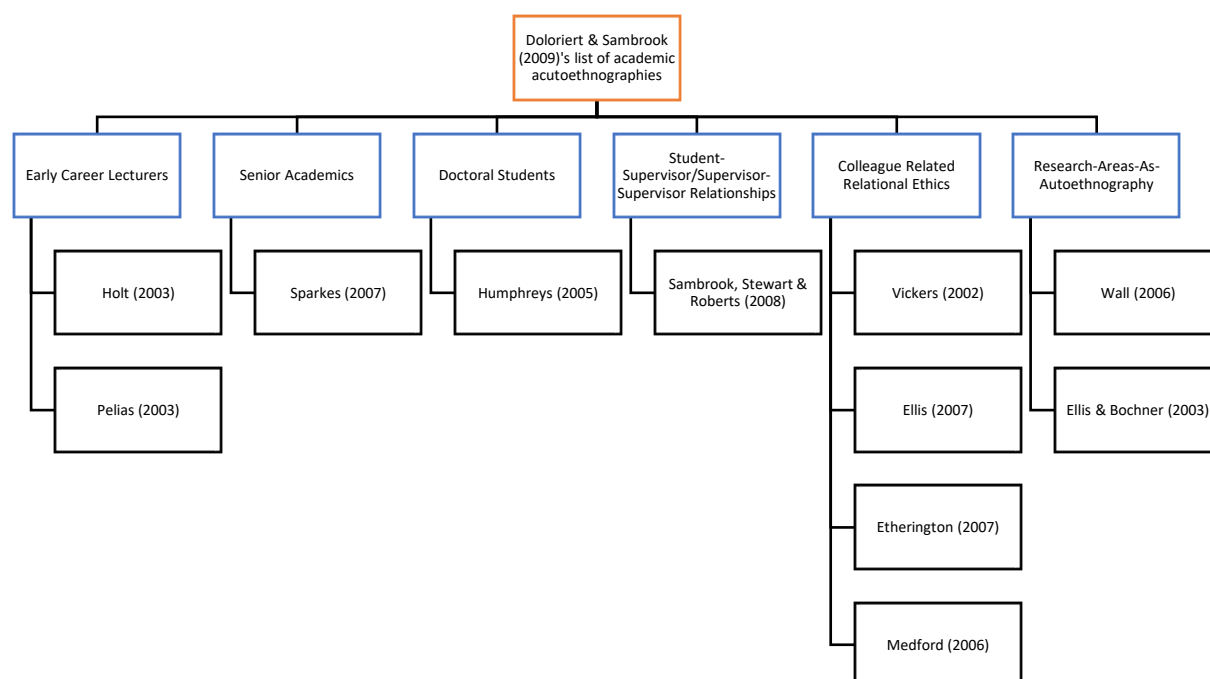
2.5.1 *The growth of autoethnographic literature exploring academic life*

Academic life was traditionally an under-examined area of autoethnographic research (Reed-Danahay, 2009). Ten years ago, even when titles appeared to suggest a focus on higher education, many ultimately failed to deal explicitly with academia (Reed-Danahay, 2009).

Happily, there has been a rapid growth in autoethnographies exploring academic life. Academic autoethnographies now cover a wide spectrum of seniority, from being a doctoral student (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009, 2011; Moriarty, 2013) to applying for Chair (Rambo, 2016). The first book dedicated to academic autoethnography (Pillay, Naicker & Pithouse-Morgan, 2016) was published three years ago, although the context was limited to South Africa mainly. In 2018, a special issue of the *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* featured articles using autoethnography to investigate a range of issues in higher education. My paper on mental health illness in academia was the lead article (Campbell, 2018).

In 2009, Doloriert & Sambrook divided contributions to academic autoethnography into six distinct areas: early career lecturers, senior academics, doctoral students, student-supervisor and supervisor-supervisor relationships, colleague-related relational ethics, and research-areas-as-autoethnography. Under each heading, they provided one to two examples of relevant research. **Figure 2.2** represents the general landscape of academic autoethnography according to Doloriert & Sambrook (2009).

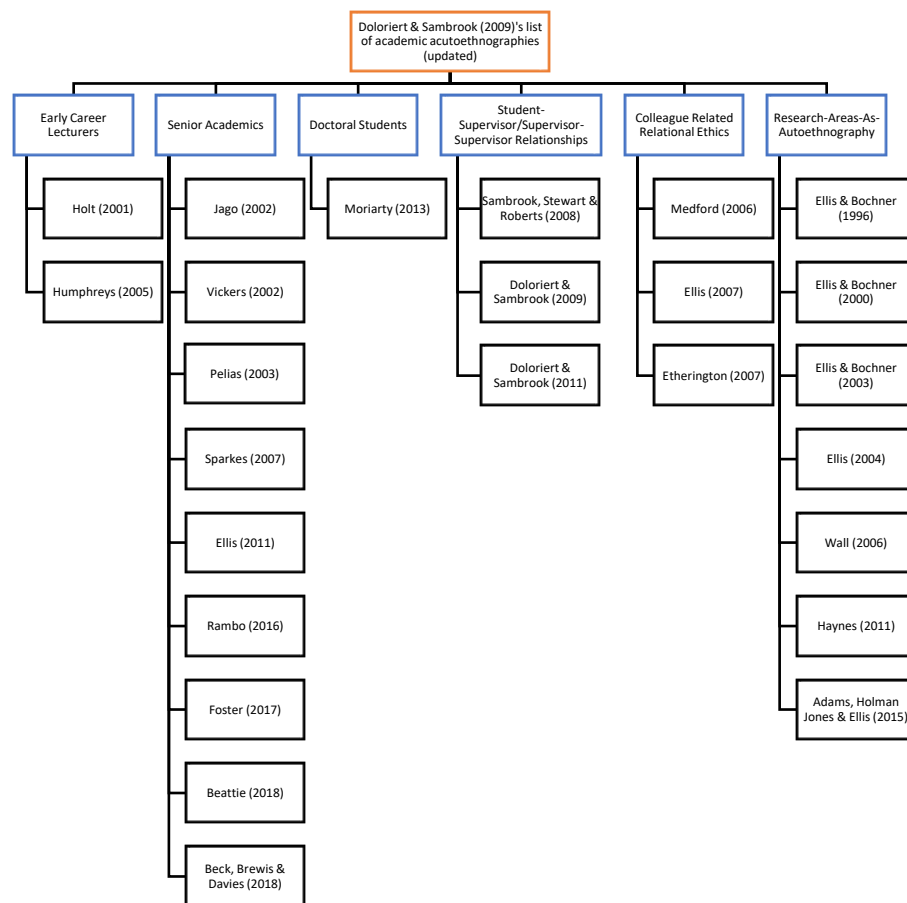
Figure 2.2 *Contributions to academic autoethnography, Doloriert & Sambrook (2009)*



I do not believe Doloriert & Sambrook meant for their examples to be definitive or exhaustive. However, when I read their article I created **Figure 2.2** as a helpful starting point for my review of academic autoethnography.

Over the years, as I have become more familiar with the literature, my understanding of academic autoethnography has evolved. I find myself in respectful disagreement with some of Doloriert & Sambrook's (2009) classifications. I have also had the benefit of access to academic autoethnography published post-2009. **Figure 2.3** represents the general landscape as I see it today. Again, my examples are not meant to be exhaustive. In this section, I will examine each category and compare my list to Doloriert & Sambrook's.

Figure 2.3 *Updated version of Doloriert & Sambrook's (2009) list of contributions to academic autoethnography*



2.5.2 Early career lecturers

For early career lecturers, Doloriert & Sambrook (2009) point to Holt (2003) and Pelias (2003). Both were published in 2003, and both are curious choices.

Holt's (2003) article does not focus on lecturing. Rather, as a PhD student "desperately in need of publications to get to the first step of the career ladder" (Holt, 2003, p. 20), he deconstructs peer feedback received on an autoethnographic manuscript. Presenting his study as an "autoethnographic writing story" (2003, p. 18), Holt creates two reviewers, one sceptical, the other sympathetic. What follows is an engaging discourse between author and 'reviewers', bringing to the fore important questions about how we evaluate autoethnographic material. It is not, however, an account of an early career lecturer. Interestingly, Holt's 2001 article, the

subject of the peer review, is a better fit. In it, Holt examines the “clash” (2001, p. 69) between his own teaching philosophy and that of the research-orientated institution he has joined. He depicts his experience as a PhD student trying to “come to terms with” (2003, p. 20) university teaching for the first time.

Pelias (2003), on the other hand, goes straight for the teaching jugular:

“Students keep coming and you think you will remember them, but most of them fade, like the new class lectures you keep using, even though you always plan on writing new ones with new ideas and new strategies that will make for an even better class, and sometimes you do, but mostly you re-work what you’ve done, copying again what you know has worked and hoping you can bring enough enthusiasm to teach this once again, and you figure since there is nothing but new faces out there, it really doesn’t matter, but you really think it does, but you don’t have the time to do anything about it, so there you are standing in front of the class saying, but feeling a little bored and trying not to show it, and having said it so many times that you have forgotten how it might be complex, because it surely isn’t for you anymore - it’s more like the Lord’s prayer or the pledge of allegiance that you can recite - but you sense that they aren’t getting it or that they don’t want to get it, so you try explaining it in a new way, and you find yourself getting excited about the ideas and in the middle of what you take to be the key point, a student asks if this will be on the test...”
(p.369)

For brevity’s sake, I have chosen to curtail the quotation. In reality, this (first) paragraph carries on for another 23 lines. The sentence, which makes up the entire paragraph, is 40 lines in total. Each of the article’s three remaining paragraphs comprise one sentence. The shortest sentence is 18 lines long. It is a stream of Pelias’ consciousness; no power, no funds, wanting to be of service, pushing on despite uneasiness, accepting that it does not matter, and, anyway, “*Friends is on*” (Pelias, 2003, p. 370). Pelias (2003) argues that academics are like tourists, never getting beyond the surface of the places they visit “even when they spend a lifetime at their sites” (p. 371). And here lies my difficulty with categorising this work as ‘early career lecturer’. While it may be useful to the new academic, it is certainly not written by one. To me, Pelias’ article (and later work - Pelias (2004)) belongs in the ‘Senior Academic’ category.

What to put under the ‘early career lecturer’ heading, instead? For my part, I would include Humphreys (2005). Although Humphreys frames his article as advocacy for the use of

autoethnographic vignettes, the stories contained in the vignettes provide a powerful narrative as to his personal transition from PhD student through to Senior Lecturer. As he notes, his account is “richer than any CV” (2005, p. 844) and reflects the non-linear nature of academic life. Though a brief account, it gives us an insight into academic career creation, progression, regression, re-creation, success, and failure.

2.5.3 *Senior academics*

Doloriert & Sambrook (2009) use Sparkes (2007) as an example of senior academic autoethnography. I understand why. When I deliver training on autoethnography to colleagues, I use the same article. Like Rambo (2016) and Jago (2002), Sparkes seeks to speak from the heart about the struggles of academic life. Unlike Rambo and Jago, however, he fictionalises his account; a narrative “inspired by partial happenings, fragmented memories, echoes of conversations, whispers in corridors, fleeting glimpses of myriad reflections seen through broken glass, and multiple layers of fiction and narrative imaginings” (Sparkes, 2007, p. 522). He presents the story of ‘Jim’, Professor and Director of Research at University of Wannabee Academic, a composite of his own experience mixed with informal discussions with other academics. His fiction speaks to an increase in the audit culture in academia and the stress of a heavy administration load that is “killing” (Sparkes, 2007, p. 536) the likes of ‘Jim’.

Sparkes is not the only autoethnographer to explore tensions felt by experienced academics. Very early into my literature review, I found an article written by Ellis (2011) dealing with the same topic (Campbell, 2016c). Hers is a highly personal and frank narrative, even providing an insight into her meetings with (and criticism of) university leaders. Ellis’ experience relates to the United States’ higher education system. Sparkes is based in the United Kingdom. Yet, both use autoethnography to produce emotive research into academic life. As one of Sparkes’ reviewers commented, autoethnographic research of this kind is both a support to colleagues and a poke in the eye to the system (Sparkes, 2007, p. 542). Both articles are, in my view, excellent companion pieces.

Autoethnography about being a senior academic continues to be a vibrant area of growth. Other, more recent, examples include neoliberalism in the academy (Foster, 2017), menopause (Beck, Brewis, & Davies, 2018), and leadership (Beattie, 2018).

2.5.4 *Doctoral students*

Interestingly, Doloriert & Sambrook (2009) place Humphreys (2005) in the ‘doctoral students’ category. I can understand that, to a certain extent. Towards the earlier part of his article, Humphreys reflects on his PhD submission and subsequent quest for a post as a lecturer. However, the remainder of the paper concentrates on Humphreys’ academic life post-November 2001, when he took up a lectureship at Nottingham University. His experiences as a doctoral student are dealt with briefly.

I find Moriarty’s (2013) autoethnography a more compelling fit. Combining narrative, creative writing, poetry, and autoethnodrama, Moriarty examines her doctoral journey. Her study is of dual interest to me because her PhD was autoethnographic. Her experience as a student was not always a happy one, personally or professionally. She encountered doubt and resistance from her own department. Her research was criticised as “too creative” (2013, p. 75). Even her thesis title and abstract were not “academic enough” (2013, p. 75). Moriarty’s story is ultimately one of triumph (she “jumped through hoops” and did “whatever it took” (2013, p. 76) to get her doctorate). However, it is also a cautionary tale of gatekeeping in the academy when attempting to push against traditional expectations of doctoral work.

2.5.5 *Student-supervisors and supervisor-supervisor relationships*

Doctoral supervision and the relationship between student and supervisor is a “critical success factor” (Sambrook, Stewart, & Roberts, 2008, p. 71) during a PhD. Unsurprisingly, academic autoethnographers have been drawn to write about their experiences as supervisor and supervisee. Doloriert & Sambrook (2009) point to Sambrook, Stewart, and Roberts (2008) as an example. Roberts is Doloriert’s former surname. Their article provides a tripartite assessment: a view from above (Stewart supervised Sambrook), below (Roberts was supervised by Sambrook) and the middle (Sambrook was supervisor and supervisee). As readers we participate in the observation of three culturally influenced aspects of the supervisory relationship: the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate, the giving and receiving of feedback, and emerging relationships (Sambrook et al., 2008). From this, questions emerge about the usefulness of supervisory friendships that limit constructive critique, and how to respond to a lack of confidence from both supervisor and doctoral students (Sambrook et al., 2008).

Understandably, Doloriert & Sambrook have repeatedly returned to the supervisory relationship as a site of autoethnography (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009, 2011). I have included their later works in my updated list (**Figure 2.3**).

2.5.6 *Colleague related-relational ethics*

For a discussion of ethical issues arising from writing about our colleagues, Doloriert & Sambrook (2009) point to Vickers (2002), Medford (2006), Ellis (2007), and Etherington (2007). Medford, Ellis, and Etherington explicitly tackle the ethical dilemmas which swirl “like a sand storm” (Ellis, 2007, p. 22) when considering the potential harm to colleagues who unwittingly become part of an autoethnographer’s published narrative. I look in more detail at their conclusions and suggestions in **Chapter 5**.

Vickers (2002), however, is a peculiar addition to this list. Hers is a horrifying tale of sexual harassment, disability discrimination, bullying, and, ultimately, assault in the workplace. Extracts from her diary describe the harm she suffered at the hands of a male Professor, including occasions where she was told to “go fuck” (2002, p. 615) herself and to “shut up, bitch” (2007, p. 233) in the presence of fellow and visiting colleagues. To “protect the worthy and the unworthy” (2002, p. 614), Vickers uses pseudonyms throughout. She does not disclose the name of the university where the bullying took place, nor the date when it occurred. However, the extent of her exploration of ethics is limited to these factual statements. Her focus is very much on the “danger of psychic trauma” (2002, p. 612) for autoethnographers, rather than the ethical dilemmas of writing about former colleagues. In my updated list, I removed her from this category and added her to ‘Senior Academics’ (**Figure 2.3**).

2.5.7 *Research-areas-as-autoethnography*

The process of doing autoethnography in the academy is a popular topic to research. Doloriert & Sambrook (2009) cite Wall (2006) and Ellis & Bochner (2003). To this list, I would also add some of Ellis’ numerous (and often co-authored) articles and books (see, for example, Ellis & Bochner, 1996a; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Ellis et al., 2011).

Rather than conform to the distant approach to communication we traditionally expect of research methods guides, Ellis and her co-authors deliberately use narrative. Ellis & Bochner

(1996a) is a good example. They begin by, literally, setting the scene (“*Scene: The living room of a middle-class home. A brick fireplace, reaching through the 25-foot-tall beamed cathedral ceiling, separates the rustic, cedar living area from a newly remodeled kitchen*”). The remainder of the chapter is a two-person play, where the authors discuss their unease with their editor's request for a 'standard' introduction chapter. Through their interaction, we learn the book is "not intended to be a received text" (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a, p. 14) and encounter Ellis and Bochner's opinions on each of the chapters. In Ellis & Bochner (2000), a chapter published in the *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, they again relive conversations about the genesis of the text: “Let’s just write to Norman and Yvonna and bow out. Think of the time we could spend on the beach instead. Get some immediate gratification for a change” (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, pp. 733-735). As with many of their joint publications, I was left feeling as though I had eavesdropped on Ellis and Bochner’s private conversations. Through these conversations, however, comes illumination as to the experience of writing autoethnographically. Others have followed suit, creating autoethnographies of learning about (Wall, 2006) and presenting (Haynes, 2011) autoethnography.

2.6 Lack of autoethnography exploring experiential education

The recent proliferation of academic autoethnography reflects a growing interest in and acceptance of deeply reflexive research located in higher education. Autoethnography endures across a surprising disciplinary spectrum, including recreation and leisure studies (Chapeskie, 2015), health psychology (Frankhouser & Defenbaugh, 2017; Cipolletta, 2018; Lourens, 2018), business (Haynes, 2011, 2013), sport science (Sparkes, 1996; 2003; Cox, Dickson & Cox, 2017) and criminology (Wakeman, 2014).

However, researchers in my area of academic practice, experiential education or ‘learning by doing’, have yet to meaningfully engage with autoethnography. The best I could find was Griffin et al’s (2015) paper on the use of dummies in nursing education. Despite valiant and ambitious aims, the authors’ reflections are limited. Their conclusions about learning and teaching are fairly generic.

Outside of my own publications (Campbell, 2016c, 2017b), clinical legal education remains a stranger to autoethnography. The lack of autoethnographic research in clinical legal education does not, however, mean that law clinicians lack reflexivity. Legal clinicians are by their nature

reflective practitioners (Caplow, 1993), looking to develop reflexive practice in the students they supervise. Indeed, many university law clinics and Law School *pro bono* projects, following Schön's (1983, 1987) seminal work, actively require their students to reflect on the work they do (Kerrigan & Murray, 2011). Given this context, I am surprised by law clinic supervisors' lack of engagement with autoethnography. I reflect on the possible reasons in more detail in **Chapter 3**.

2.7 Revealing secrets and making sense of events through autoethnography

Many of the academic autoethnographies I have discussed in this chapter involve the disclosure of an untold secret (see, for example, Vickers, 2002; Rambo, 2016; Campbell, 2018). Some have used autoethnographic writing as a sensemaking process. In this final section, I briefly look at some of the wider autoethnographic literature touching on both themes. I will return to these themes again in **Chapters 5** and **6** when discussing my own data.

2.7.1 Disclosing secrets

Many autoethnographies reveal experiences rarely found in academic journals but often whispered about behind closed doors. Autoethnographers have chosen to share, for the first time, their encounters with abortion (Ellis & Bochner, 1992), sexuality (Adams, 2011), eating disorders (Tillmann-Healy, 1996; Chatham-Carpenter, 2010), abuse (Rambo Ronai, 1997; Custer, 2014), miscarriage (Foster, 2010), bullying (Vickers, 2007), and depression (Jago, 2002; Campbell, 2018).

Tillmann-Healy (1996), for example, invites readers to share her secret life as a bulimic woman. She presents bulimia as a character in her own life and weaves non-linear recollections from their joint past with poetry, stories about creating the poems, and medical research on eating disorders. Through this research, I was able to build a picture of the complexity of bulimia and Tillman-Healy's desire to "tuck" the bulimia "deep in my closet, behind old dresses and old shoes" (1996, p. 76).

Autoethnography allowed Tillmann-Healy to write a "sensual text" (1996, p. 104). Her research is purposefully designed to pull the reader "away from the abstractions and categories that fill traditional research on eating disorders and into the experience" (1996, p.104). In doing so, she

encourages a deeper understanding of a human story typically sanitised or concealed.

Similarly, Jago's (2002) account of her depression breaks the silence on mental health illness in academia. Jago writes explicitly about her descent into attempted suicide, and the guilt, fear, and paranoia she felt as she returned to university life. She wrote her autoethnography because it was the "story of the academy" (2002, p. 738). It is also, however, a story buried and unvoiced (Campbell, 2018).

By using themselves as the subject, Jago (2002) and Tillmann-Healy (1996) were able to create a piece of research rich with experiential detail, deepening existing knowledge of mental health illness.

2.7.2 Autoethnography as a sensemaking process

Autoethnography can help researchers make sense of experiences and encounters. This is illustrated by two very different texts. First, Vickers (2007) draws on memories, visceral reactions, and contemporaneous notes to investigate what was going on when she experienced bullying at work. She interrogates her initial reaction that there was something not quite right about her new workplace and, later, explores her surprise at her (and others') muted reaction to the harassment and threats she suffered. Autoethnography enabled Vickers to "go beyond the emotion" (2007, p. 224) tied to her memories, and move towards understanding of the factors leading to a toxic work environment.

Foster (2010), on the other hand, utilises narrative vignettes to explore her lived experience as a woman seeking to have a child. She does not refer to her autoethnography as a sensemaking process, but, as this passage shows, Foster is clearly attempting to address biological, cultural, and relational questions accompanying her "delayed" (2010, p.144) attempts at conception:

"By being a "good feminist" and striving to develop my identity as an accomplished and empowered member of society, I wonder if I have been a "bad woman" by failing to understand and respond to the realities of my body" (2010, p. 145).

Autoethnographic writing can in itself be an investigative process, where the researcher can ask herself "What is going on here and what does it mean?" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 184).

2.8 Concluding comments

The chapter provides an autoethnographic account of my journey into autoethnography. In doing so, I have provided an insight into practical issues relating to literature review sometimes dealt with hurriedly, or not at all. For example, I have highlighted difficulties in accessing autoethnographic material in the United Kingdom and offered greater understanding of the practice of literature searching through the lens of systematised creativity.

My review of the literature has confirmed that increasing numbers of academics are employing autoethnography to explore practice and culture in higher education. However, experiential educators are yet to utilise, or investigate the use of, autoethnography as a method/ology in any meaningful way. In **Chapter 3**, I map the literature relating to supervision in university law clinics and speculate as to reasons for the shortage of autoethnographic research into clinical legal education.

Chapter 3 MAPPING WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT IN-HOUSE UNIVERSITY LAW CLINIC SUPERVISION

3.1 Introduction

The existing body of research on university law clinic supervision emphasises how to be an effective supervisor for the benefit of the students (see, for example, Krieling, 1981; Fletcher & Weinstein, 2002; Martinez, 2016; Evans et al., 2017). Advice provided is eminently sensible, but it tends to be broad and generic. Curiously, many experienced supervisors prefer to write from a distance, positioning themselves as dispassionate observers (see, for example, Hoffman, 1986; Bennett & Fishlowitz, 2003). There is a paucity of complex insider accounts about the reality of being a supervisor. The literature is fragmented, out of date, and lacks deeply critical analysis of supervisors' lived experiences.

This chapter provides a guide to the literature on in-house university law clinic supervision. First, I examine and critique what we currently know about in-house university law clinic supervisory experiences, paying specific attention to the evidence base for our current knowledge. I go on to detail the challenges faced by in-house supervisors according to existing research. Next, I identify gaps in the literature which deserve further investigation. In the final section, I take the opportunity to speculate as to the reasons why so few supervisors are utilising personal, autobiographical research methods in their published works.

A final note. Over the years, research on a variety of supervisory contexts, including externships (Maher, 1990; Blanco & Buhai, 2004), child advocacy clinics (Duquette, 1997), student volunteer law services (Bennett & Fishlowitz, 2003), and the courtroom (Gundlach, 2007) has emerged. I considered including a review of the broader literature, including other supervisory contexts and research exploring effective supervision. However, this study specifically looks at my lived experience as an in-house law clinic supervisor. Research on other contexts and advice on how to be a better supervisor have little bearing on my findings. I hope the increased focus on in-house supervision makes for a more coherent and relevant review of the clinical legal education literature.

3.2 What do we know about in-house university law clinic supervisory experiences?

3.2.1 Locating useful literature

If my goal was to investigate the tenets of effective supervision, this chapter would have been much easier to write. I found plenty of research on the rationale behind and the benefits of supervision (see, for example, Bloch, 1982; Gowland & McKeown, 2011). I read a variety of excellent papers on appropriate supervisory techniques (see, for example, Bloch, 1982; Juergens, 1993; Wortham, Klein, & Blaustone, 2012). Yet, I struggled to locate research exploring supervisors' lived experience of working in the law clinic.

I was surprised at how difficult it was to find useful literature. For example, when I searched the archive of the *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education*, I expected to find at least 10 articles with supervision (or variants of the word) in the title. I was confused when the results showed only one article (out of, at the time, 25 volumes). Then it transpired that the one article (Unger & Russell, 2017) was not an article at all, but a document comprising the agenda for a Quality & Supervision Conference (held the previous year) together with commentary participants had produced. I reviewed later issues (and other journals) to see if I could find published papers from the same conference. There were none.

Nevertheless, I was able to locate a small number of studies making use of autobiographical material. Happily for me, most related to in-house supervision. Some of the literature I found was written specifically with new supervisors in mind (Dunlap & Joy, 2004; Macfarlane & McKeown, 2008). However, most made no distinction between different levels of experience. The extent and depth of the reflection also varied significantly. Some scholars did not even openly identify their work as reflective. Others combined reflective material with survey data (see, for example, Stark et al., 1993; Dunlap & Joy, 2004).

Interestingly, most of the reflective studies I found were published in the second volume of the *Clinical Law Review* in a 1995 collection called *Essays on Clinical Supervision*. Most of the Essays were linked in some way to the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS). They included edited transcripts of talks and plenary sessions presented to the AALS (Lerman, 1995; Schön, 1995). Some Essays arose out of preparations for AALS Annual Meetings (Barry, 1995; Lyman, 1995).

3.2.2 Evidence base

Our knowledge of the lived experience of in-house university law clinic supervisors appears to be largely informed by questionnaires (Stark et al., 1993; Chandler, 2011) or personal reflections (Barry, 1995; Howard, 1995; Lyman, 1995; Schön, 1995; Macfarlane & McKeown, 2008).

Studies using questionnaires have successfully collected fairly useful data sets. Stark et al (1993), for example, developed a thirty-five item questionnaire on directiveness in clinic supervision. Respondents included 107 supervisors from 59 law schools in 29 US states plus the District of Columbia. Dunlop & Joy (2004) went further, capturing data on the major issues confronting new clinicians over a period of 6 years. Common themes emerged from both studies. However, as Stark et al (1993) acknowledged, participants who responded were not necessarily representative of the larger community of supervisors. They make an important point. Some supervisors are harder to engage and therefore less frequently represented in research. In addition, "idiosyncratic responses" (Dunlap & Joy, 2004, p. 58) do not always lend themselves to being "shoehorned into particular categories" (Dunlap & Joy, 2004, p. 58). Some stories could be lost or set aside due to an (understandable) desire to find an overarching narrative.

Personal stories, on the other hand, allow supervisors to use their own voice and reflect on experiences that might be otherwise overlooked. However, the studies I found using narrative (see, for example, Barry, 1995; Howard, 1995; Lyman, 1995; Macfarlane & McKeown, 2008) were rarely positioned as reflexive. In fact, methodology was barely mentioned at all.

Failure to discuss (or even refer to) methodology is not a phenomenon exclusive to the supervisory literature in clinical legal education. Although we have moved on from the days where supervisors questioned the value of scholarship (Bloch, 2004), the quality of research that has emerged has been inconstant (Tomoszek, 2014; Ching, Maharg, Sherr, & Webb, 2015; Dunn, 2017b). Clinical scholars are increasingly calling for clearer links to methodology and further use of methodological innovations (Hall, 2015; Mkwebu, 2015, 2016). I was fortunate to locate some (albeit limited) research that provided with me with individual supervisors' thoughts and feelings on their role. However, I would have liked to have understood whether the research I read was influenced by particular concepts and theories or based on a specific methodological approach.

3.2.3 Key challenges for new supervisors

When I joined my law clinic, I was expected to start supervising students and live cases immediately. Whilst I could (and did) ask my colleagues questions, I was given no formal training. My experience is not unusual. Few Law Schools offer training programmes for new supervisors transitioning from private practice to law clinic teaching (Dunlap & Joy, 2004).

A small number of researchers have recognised the need to provide new supervisors with guidance. In the US, for example, Dunlap & Joy (2004) structured a clinical training session based on the concerns of new clinical faculty. Over a three-year period, using the Clinical Legal Education Association New Teachers Conference mailing list, Dunlap & Joy contacted new law clinic supervisors and asked them to complete a series of statements. The statements are listed in **Figure 3.1**.

Figure 3.1 *List of statements Dunlap & Joy (2004) asked new clinicians to complete*

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | When I first started clinical teaching, I wish I had known: |
| 2 | The greatest obstacle/challenge I have faced as a clinical teacher is: |
| 3 | The most difficult student trait I have encountered is: |
| 4 | The biggest surprise I experienced in my first year of teaching in clinic is: |
| 5 | The hardest thing about teaching in the clinic is: |
| 6 | The easiest thing about teaching in the clinic is: |
| 7 | If I were clinic director, the first thing I would do is: |
| 8 | I want to improve or develop the following skill: |
| 9 | If I could tell a new clinician one thing, it would be: |
| 10 | I would most like to discuss the following with other clinical faculty: |

For each annual dataset, Dunlap & Joy constructed lists of the 10 easiest and hardest things about clinical teaching (**Figure 3.2**). From these lists and the themes raised in the paper, I created a mind map of the key challenges for new clinical supervisors identified in Dunlap & Joy's paper (**Figure 3.3**).

Figure 3.2 *Dunlap & Joy's (2004) lists of the 10 easiest and hardest things about clinical teaching, by year (1999, 2001, 2003)*

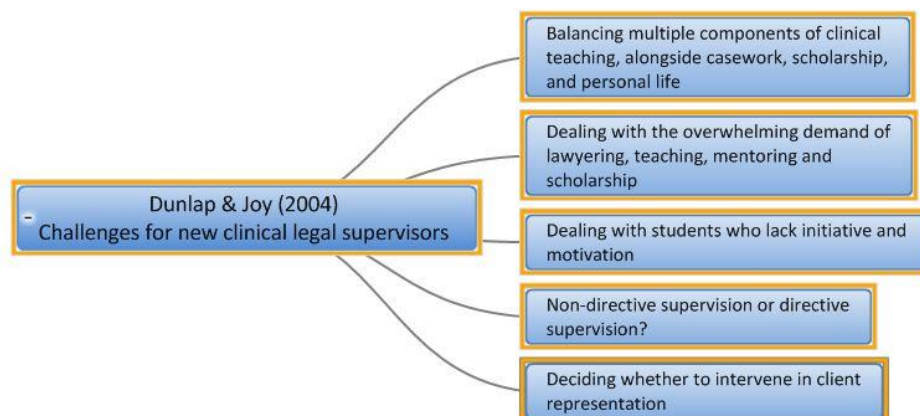
Year	The Ten Easiest Things About Clinical Teaching	The Ten Hardest Things About Clinical Teaching
1999	Nothing is easy	Being responsible for some else's work
	Having students deal with case details and file management	Losing my activist self for a more patient, blander, law-school-focused self
	Mooting court appearances	Being the enforcer – calling students on failure to meet deadlines, etc.
	Not worrying about the survival of the office	Knowing how much or when to intervene
	Sharing what I know	Having students keep their eye on the ball
	Supervising strong, motivated students	Grading students fairly
	Doing work I believe in and teaching others to do it well	Second class status
	Working with students committed to social justice	Lack of colleagues
	Freedom and autonomy of the job	Supervising students who lack basic skills and/or who are not working up to potential
	Spending time with or talking to students	Balancing time between teaching, casework, and scholarship

Year	The Five Easiest Things About Clinical Teaching	The Ten Hardest Things About Clinical Teaching
2001	No need to reinvent the wheel	Learning to say no
	Working with colleagues	Staying out of the way
	Interesting work	Balancing client needs with student needs in the context of student time constraints
	Student commitment	Keeping track of everything
	Working with great students	Giving effective critiques
		Making the classroom component

		interesting
		Time management and getting it all done
		Making the switch from practice to teaching
		Dealing with apathetic students
		Being non-directive

Year	The Five Easiest Things About Clinical Teaching	The Ten Hardest Things About Clinical Teaching
2003	Nothing is easy	Staying ahead of the students
	Teaching skills in the areas of my expertise	Clients and students don't adapt well to the academic format and schedule
	Great clients/cases	Dealing with deadlines when the students are supposed to be in control of the cases
	Enjoyable work – especially with students enthusiastic about helping others	Knowing when to keep my mouth shut and let students make mistakes
	Relationships/rapport/working with students	Encouraging students to develop and implement their own case plans
		Knowing when to intervene when the student is supposed to be in control
		Balancing obligations to clients with educational needs of students
		Striking the balance between directive and facilitative
		Supervising students who lack basic skills and/or who are not working up to potential
		The enormous time and effort it takes to do it right and never having enough time

Figure 3.3 *Mind Map based on Dunlap & Joy (2004)'s challenges for new clinical legal supervisors*



In the UK, Macfarlane & McKeown’s (2008) *10 lessons for clinicians* emerged from their own first year of transition from practising lawyers to law clinic supervisors. The lessons (**Figure 3.4**) share some similarities with Dunlap & Joy’s (2004) findings. For example, Macfarlane & McKeown note the challenge of finding a balance between being directive and allowing the student autonomy (Lesson 4: “Whose file is it anyway?”, Lesson 5: “Answer a question with a question”, Lesson 7: “Encourage expression of views”). They point out that the student must do the work, not observe it being done: “the file belongs to the student, and we as clinicians will assist!” (2008, p. 67).

Figure 3.4 *Macfarlane & McKeown's (2008) 10 lessons for new clinicians*

Lesson 1	Do not pre-judge the students
Lesson 2	Patience!
Lesson 3	“The transition from student to professional does not always run smoothly”
Lesson 4	Whose file is it anyway?
Lesson 5	Answer a question with a question
Lesson 6	Start at the end and work backwards
Lesson 7	Encourage expression of views

Lesson 8	Do not expect the students to understand reflection!
Lesson 9	Do not be afraid of assessment
Lesson 10	ENJOY

Overall, however, many of the lessons set out by Macfarlane & McKeown (2008) differ from the advice espoused by Dunlap & Joy (2004). Lesson 6 (“start at the end and work backwards”), for example, reminds supervisors that in practice they would be considering the final hearing even at the first stages of contentious work. Accordingly, Macfarlane & McKeown (2008) advise supervisors to apply this to all aspects of their supervisory practice, including, for example, the assessment criteria. The references to contentious work and assessment may alienate supervisors who do not engage in this type of work or refrain from assessing their students (much like Lessons 8: “Do not expect the students to understand reflection!” and Lesson 9: “Do not be afraid of assessment”). However, having an overview of the year remains a good idea.

Interestingly, Macfarlane & McKeown’s (2008) first two lessons focus on the student experience. Lesson 1 warns supervisors to refrain from prejudging the students. While it may be easy to give academically gifted students the complex and demanding cases, Macfarlane & McKeown (2008) say this cannot be justified. Every student should be given the opportunity to perform. Lesson 2 cautions against unrealistically high expectations of the students. Clinic cases progress more slowly than in private practice and therefore supervisors should be patient. Both lessons contain useful advice, drawing on common supervisory experiences.

3.2.4 Key challenges for all supervisors

Many of the challenges identified in the guidance aimed at new supervisors are also present in papers exploring supervision at all stages. For example, deciding if and when to intervene is a recurring theme in studies on law clinic supervision generally (Barry, 1995; Williams, 2002; Wortham et al., 2012). Nevertheless, there is a range of views in terms of how directive a supervisor should be. Some advise flexibility in accordance with personal supervision styles (Williams, 2002). Others reject the notion that supervisors can simultaneously give students broad responsibility and clients the best possible representation (Stark et al., 1993). Whatever their views on the level of direction, however, supervisors do acknowledge the need to walk a fine line between building a student's self-confidence and destroying it (Barry, 1995; Lyman, 1995; Chandler, 2011).

I cannot finish this section without referencing *A Teacher's Trouble* (Lerman, 1995), an edited transcript of a plenary session using role play delivered at the 1995 Annual Meeting of the Association of American Law Schools, held in New Orleans. It is one of the most engaging and useful papers exploring the intricate nature of the conflict supervisors face when trying to balance their obligations to students and clients.

The first role-play in *A Teacher's Trouble* concerned the tension between the supervisor's duty to their clients and responsibility for the students. The scenario involved the potential exposure of a pair of students to tuberculosis via an incarcerated client. An exchange took place between the supervisor and a student who had strong concerns about his own and his (pregnant) partner student's well-being. At the end of the role play, delegates were invited to ask the student questions and to consider how seriously they should take the student's anxiety (Lerman, 1995).

Many of the delegates who responded to the role-play highlighted the student's lack of empathy toward the client's plight. There was also a strong feeling that the supervisor was obligated to "find a way" (Lerman, 1995, p. 322) for the students to continue to represent the client. One delegate wanted the supervisor to take a strong position and demand that the students go back to see the client, although they advised the supervisor to reassure the students that they would be speaking through a glass partition. The overwhelming sense that the client comes first accords with Chandler's (2011) research, where 64.7% of supervisors said their duty to the client was more important to them than their duty to their students. It is important, however, to note the one dissenting voice who queried whether the scenario was any different from the Wall Street lawyers who refused to represent the World Trade bomber. She asked why students should be placed at physical risk when more experienced (and paid) lawyers were "let off the hook" (Lerman, 1995, p. 322).

In the second role-play, a student complained to their supervisor about a lack of court-based work during her clinic experience. The student begrudged helping her clients to purchase a large apartment building in a poor neighbourhood. Her clients were tenants in the apartment building, and the scheme was constructed to help the clients have autonomy over their living arrangements. The student particularly resented spending time trying to arrange childcare for her client so they could attend a meeting with her. She argued forcefully that she did not come to law school to be a social worker or social secretary. During the subsequent discussion, the topic turned quickly to social justice issues. The student's 'supervisor' explained that he made

sure his students did not feel pressured to "sign on" (Lerman, 1995, p. 345) to his own social agenda when he took on co-operative community projects. Others identified potential issues with the student, as an African-American woman, being asked to arrange childcare. Again, the level of empathy with the student was minimal. One of the delegates was "struck by the tension between being the nice empathetic people we want to be and selling the messages that I think we often feel we really should sell" (Lerman, 1995, p. 346). Interestingly, however, another delegate (in stark contrast to the response to the first scenario), concluded that it was her "job" (Lerman, 1995, p. 345) to protect students when clients ask students to go beyond what was originally agreed.

3.2.5 *The students' perspective*

There is limited research exploring supervisors' lived experience of clinical teaching. However, there is even less written from the perspective of a student under supervision. A rare example is Howard's (1995) reflective report on her clinic experience at Columbus Law School. Although Howard's research focusses on her journey towards thinking like a lawyer, I identified three key observations about supervision in her paper. The observations are weaved into the piece, and could easily be overlooked, but I think they give a powerful insight into the nature of the supervisory relationship.

First, Howard notes that the blurring of the traditional student/lecturer roles makes life more complicated for supervisors as they try to negotiate giving students "partial independence" (1995, p. 180). She shows real empathy with the supervisor's plight, noting how complex clinic supervision is compared to traditional forms of teaching. Next, Howard reflects on how she was "virtually blind" (1995, p. 180) to the level of planning supervision required. She argues that students are socialised to believe supervisors "*innately* have the answers" (*original emphasis*, 1995, p. 180), noting that it did not occur to her that supervisors made deliberate decisions as to how to relate to their students. Finally, she admits that she does not envy the supervisor's need to adapt, noting that clinicians wear "many hats throughout the semester" (1995, p. 180).

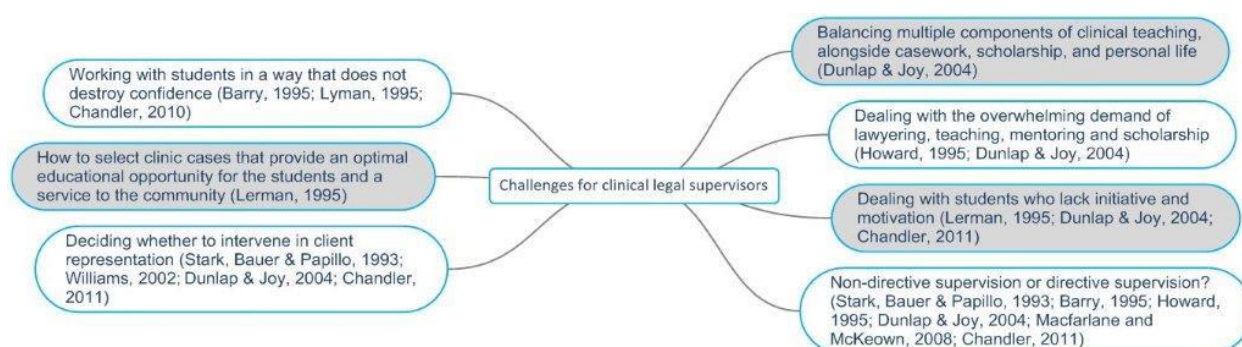
Howard's article was published with the hope it would start a tradition of including the student voice in dialogue on clinical pedagogy (Barry, 1995). Unfortunately, this has not been the case. According to Google Scholar (June 2018), Howard's article has been cited 57 times. Yet, only one of the citing articles is written by a law student (Ward, 2009). Unfortunately, his article focuses

on the law school's social justice vision, rather than clinical supervision. There are other articles written by law students that do not cite Howard (see, for example, Rader, 1995; Lynn, 2005), but they are limited in number and do not focus on supervisory issues. I have yet to find an article (about supervision, or otherwise) written by a law clinic student post-2005.

3.2.6 Mapping the challenges associated with in-house university law clinic supervision

In this final section, I have re-mapped the key challenges faced by supervisors (**Figure 3.5**). I have taken the mind map I created for Dunlap & Joy's (2004) article (**Figure 3.3**) and added additional challenges identified in other research. **Figure 3.5** now provides an up to date visual of the issues facing in-house university law clinic supervisors.

Figure 3.5 Key challenges associated with in-house university law clinic supervision



3.3 What don't we know about in-house university law clinic supervisory experiences?

3.3.1 How does the supervisory role manifest itself?

In much of the literature, titles like 'mentor' and 'supervisor' are used without explanation or exploration. Some scholars prefer to use 'teacher' (Critchlow, 1991). Often, different titles appear interchangeably in the same article (see, for example, Stark et al., 1993; Blanco & Buhai, 2004; Mlyniec, 2012).

Supervisors appear to be inclined to choose a word they feel best describes their role. In

Chandler's (2011) study, 39.7% of supervisors identified themselves as educators, 26.5% as clinicians, 20.6% as legal practitioners, 11.8% as lecturers, 11.8% as academics, and 2.9% as trainers. These results are interesting, but they do not tell us what each of the respondents took each phrase to mean. Could one person's lecturer be another person's academic? We also do not get a sense of how each supervisor made their choice. What happens on a day to day basis in the clinic that would lead a supervisor to choose lecturer over educator? Is it not possible for a supervisor's identity to comprise more than one characteristic? Could she not be an educator and an academic? Or a legal practitioner, lecturer, and trainer?

The mechanisms that underpin how supervisors' identities manifest are not yet fully understood. Further research into this issue would, in my view, be an important addition to the discourse on clinical legal education.

3.3.2 How much time do supervisors spend on supervision?

Clinical legal education has a reputation for being time-consuming (see, most recently, Evans et al., 2017; Unger & Russell, 2017). Colleagues from my own clinic have highlighted how "excessive workload" (Unger & Russell, 2017, p. 99) led a number of our supervisors to leave the clinic teaching team because they felt "swamped" (Unger & Russell, 2017, p. 99). Heavy workload and the intensive nature of supervision has been cited as a reason for a lack of clinical legal education in certain jurisdictions (Uphoff, 1999).

Despite this consensus, there is a paucity of data regarding time spent on supervision. I only found two documents that looked at supervisory time in any detail, and I have strong concerns about drawing too many conclusions from the data. First, the Report on the Committee of the Future of the In-House Clinic (Dinerstein, 1992) provided some statistical evidence relating to US clinics in the late 1980s/early 1990s. However, the legal education landscape has changed drastically since 1992 and the Report is now woefully out of the date.

Chandler's (2011) study is more recent. It also includes a table showing the percentage of time participants spent in contact with students or supervising students' written work (**Figure 3.6**)

Figure 3.6 *Percentage of time participants spent in contact with their students or supervising students' work according to Chandler (2011, p. 97)*

Hours per week	Up to 7	Up to 14	Up to 21	Up to 28	Up to 35
Contact	42.6	25	11.8	11.8	5.9
Supervision of written work	57.4	27.9	8.8	4.4	2.9

Whilst the results are interesting to look at, I remain unclear as to how Chandler's respondents made their calculations. I was particularly struck by the fluidity of the word 'contact'. I have formal contact with my students once a week, for an hour or so, but I also have informal contact in my office, the clinic, and, more often than not, the corridor between my office and the clinic. Students also engage with me via telephone and e-mail. Did 'contact' mean formal, timetabled face to face experiences? Or did it also encompass more casual conversations held outside of appointed timeslots? Similarly, did 'supervision of written work' simply include time spent reviewing documents? Or did it also include discussions with the student before and after they submitted their work, facilitating group peer review on the documents, and the supervisor's own research into the legal issue in order to ensure the student had the right answer?

There is an urgent need for an up-to-date study with a systematic approach to data collection, identifying how much time was spent on defined aspects of the supervisory role. Given the emerging evidence about law teacher well-being (Wilson & Strevens, 2018), this is an area that demands greater attention than it currently receives.

3.3.3 *The emotional impact of supervision on the supervisor*

The impact of the law clinic supervisory role on supervisors' emotions been largely ignored and under-theorised. Many studies refer to supervisors dealing with various challenges, but accompanying emotions are not explicitly analysed (see, for example, Dunlap & Joy, 2004). Specific references to emotional states are often buried in extensive footnotes (see, for example, Barry, 1995; Howard, 1995).

Chandler's (2011) survey results go some way to revealing how supervisors feel when faced with (a) the tension between prioritising the client or the student (**Figure 3.7**) and (b) students who work below expectation or withdraw (**Figure 3.8**). Nevertheless, I fear we must treat the data with some caution. I am unsure, for example, whether Chandler's respondents were permitted to freely think of a word describing their feelings, or if they selected one from a pre-determined list. I also do not know if the respondents were recalling feelings felt at a particular time, or whether the data was captured when the scenario occurred.

Figure 3.7 *Emotions felt by supervisors when faced with the tension between prioritising the client or the student, Chandler (2011, p. 95)*

Emotion	Percentage
Conflicted	55.9
Concern	54.4
Confusion	32.4
Frustration	25
Satisfaction	22.1
Irritation	13.2
Impatience	11.8

Figure 3.8 *Emotions felt by supervisors when students work below expectation, Chandler (2011, p. 99)*

Emotion	Percentage
Concern	52.9
Frustration	38.2
Annoyance	35.3
Anger	2.94

Chandler's (2011) survey results provide some insight into supervisors' emotions, especially in the qualitative data where supervisors are able to give context and make use of their own voice and turn of phrase. One supervisor spoke of the stress they felt, including spending "the occasional night in fitful sleep worrying about a particular case" (p. 98). Another recalled the pleasure at seeing a student develop and feeling a sense of pride "rather like a parent might a

child” (p.98). However, there remains a paucity of (contemporaneous) evidence on the emotional impact of law clinic supervision on the supervisor.

3.4 Can we draw on research from clinical medical education?

The development of clinical legal education was heavily influenced by medical pedagogy (Cregar & Glaser, 1970; Grossman, 1974; Wilson, 2004). However, despite the fact that supervisory practice in medicine is much further developed than in law (Evans et al., 2017), there is a surprisingly limited amount of literature addressing medical training and supervision (Kilminster & Jolly, 2000).

Kilminster & Jolly (2000) provide a devastating critique of the quality and content of existing research into clinical supervision in medicine. Their systematic review of the literature found that supervision was probably the "least investigated, discussed and developed aspect of clinical [medical] education" (2000, p. 828). There is little empirical or theoretical basis for supervisory practice in medicine and existing research concentrates on one-to-one supervision (Kilminster & Jolly, 2000). Kilminster & Jolly (2000) also conclude that research into supervisory practice presents methodological problems. Adequate methodologies have yet to be established and more "structured and methodologically sound programmes of research" (Kilminster & Jolly, 2000, p. 836) are required.

Kilminster & Jolly's (2000) review was broad. They covered nursing, social work, teaching, psychology, and counselling as well as general medicine. Helpfully, other studies in these disciplines back up their assessment. For example, the limited knowledge of social work supervision has been widely acknowledged (Harkness & Poertner, 1989; Tsui, 1997; Bogo & McKnight, 2005). At first, based on this rather dismal conclusion, I shied away from looking further at social work supervisory research. However, I was encouraged by my supervisors to scrutinise the literature further, and after doing so found an interesting paper on the supervisory support likely to contribute to positive worker outcomes in child welfare, social work, and mental health settings (Mor Barak et al., 2009). The study found that supervisors who provided tangible, work-related advice and instruction and offered solutions to work-related problems contributed to higher rates of retention. Social and emotional support was another key issue. Supervisors who listened to their supervisees as they discussed work-related difficulties, and related to their emotional needs when they felt overwhelmed, stressed, or confused had a

beneficial impact. Finally, the study found a positive link between a supervisee's perception of the quality of the supervisory relationship and their own sense of competence, success, and satisfaction (Mor Barak et al., 2009). Whilst this paper firmly focussed on the outcomes for the supervisee, rather than the supervisor, I found the emphasis on emotional support and interpersonal interactions of interest given the lack of analysis in the current clinical legal education literature.

Finding time for supervision is also discussed in clinical medical literature (Kilminster & Jolly, 2000). As with the anecdotal evidence in law clinic research, the scarcity of protected time for clinical teaching has been characterised as a crisis (Kilminster & Jolly, 2000). Some medical supervisors have also left the clinic setting due to time pressures (Skeff, Bowen & Irby, 1997). However, like in clinical legal education, specific and detailed data about time spent is missing from the literature.

When I started my literature review, I quickly realised that law clinic supervision research was not as extensive as I would have hoped. I presumed I would be able to fill some gaps by looking to a variety of medical settings. However, there is surprisingly little I can draw from medical literature, beyond the usual 'what makes a good supervisor' advice. If anything, my brief review of the medical literature shows that research on the lived experience of supervisors is limited across the board, and not just in the law clinic setting.

3.5 Why is the literature so limited, and why are there so few personal supervisory stories in clinical legal education research?

In this chapter, I have outlined the shortage of critical analysis into the lived experience of the law clinic supervisor and the limited number of deeply personal supervisory narratives. I am now presented with the opportunity to speculate as to the reasons why. Why is the literature so limited? Why aren't more law clinic supervisors using autobiographical tools to critically explore their experience? Here, I draw on a combination of my own encounters, anecdotal evidence, and published research to debate the possible causes for the gaps in the literature. I also turn my gaze to the future and consider how we might encourage new voices and greater methodological diversity in clinical legal education scholarship.

3.5.1 *The ‘otherness’ of clinical supervision*

The narrow range of research concerning the role of the clinician may be symptomatic of the position of clinical teachers generally. Ever since I started in clinical legal education, I have been acutely conscious of my ‘otherness’ as a clinician. The second-class status of clinical teachers is regularly referred to in the literature (see, Tyler & Catz, 1980; Hardaway, 1981; Santacroce, Adamson, Pang, Colbert, & Hessler, 2012; Berger, 2013; Holness, 2013; Donnelly, 2015; Stark & Hunt, forthcoming). However, in all honesty, I figured this out on my first day in post when a well-meaning (ex)colleague gave me a gentle warning not to get too involved with the ‘clinic people’. Doing so would, apparently, stifle any career ambitions I might have. Best to ‘keep a foot in’ with the ‘academics’.

Seeing as I was to be one of the ‘clinic people’ the advice I received was mildly disturbing. However, my advisor was perhaps cognisant of the opportunity cost clinical teachers are subject to when it comes to progression within an institution (Donnelly, 2015). There is anecdotal and (albeit limited) empirical evidence that “regular” (de Klerk, 2007, p. 97) or “normal” (Holness, 2013, p. 336) law school academics enjoy clearly defined promotion tracks, superior status, and greater job security compared to their clinic counterparts in a range of jurisdictions (Hardaway, 1981; de Klerk, 2007; Santacroce et al., 2012; Holness, 2013).

Clinicians in medicine experience similar difficulties. The loss of clinically excellent physicians from academia has become a “disturbing trend” (Lowenstein, Fernandez & Crane, 2007). Reasons for leaving include inadequate recognition of clinical service, poor fostering of career development, and perceived problems in institutional support (Lowenstein et al., 2007).

Matters appear to be better in the United States, where 48% of all ABA-accredited law schools employ at least one tenured or tenure-track clinical faculty (Santacroce et al., 2012). However, even tenured clinical faculty are treated less favourably than their non-clinic colleagues (no summer cover of their live clinic cases, for example) (Santacroce et al., 2012; Berger, 2013). Ultimately, the majority of US clinicians are subject to precarious long- and short-term contracts or clinical fellowships lacking governance rights, pathways to promotion and secure employment (Santacroce et al., 2012). Rather damningly, Santacroce et al (2002) recommend that Deans should:

“work to bolster the diversity of voices that contribute meaningfully to faculty governance over curricular matters, admissions, and appointments, instead of working to further marginalize clinical legal education and its faculty” (2012, p. 146).

I recently discovered a paper suggesting that clinic professors in the United States are paid less than doctrinal faculty (Stark & Hunt, 2018). I was astonished. Perhaps I was naïve. Or perhaps I take my position for granted. To my shame, I often presume that all my fellow clinicians are, like me, employed on a permanent academic contract with published pay scales and associated benefits. I was recently chit-chatting during the break at a clinic conference about academic holidays, presuming the supervisors I was conversing with enjoyed the same. Not so. Sadly, one of our largest universities had taken to employing individuals to run their clinic on non-academic contracts. The clinicians were expected to supervise the live client work, provide students with feedback, set assessments, sit on exam boards, and manage the clinic. I do not know if they were required to engage in research. However, in all other aspects, their role was like mine (and they were, of course, delivering a paper at a conference). I also do not know what the supervisors I spoke to were being paid. Perhaps their salary was commensurate with mine (though, I got the distinct impression it was not). Nevertheless, it troubles me that universities are appearing to employ individuals on administrative or professional support contracts when they would have previously enjoyed the status of lecturer or senior lecturer together with the associated advantages of an academic contract. This can only exacerbate the ‘otherness’ of clinical teachers within the university environment.

I have to say that my experience does buck the trend somewhat. I began my clinic career as a Lecturer in March 2011. In August 2012, I was promoted to Senior Lecturer. Five years later, I successfully applied for promotion to Associate Professor. I have taught exclusively in the Student Law Office for eight years now, and my application for Associate Professor relied heavily on the clinical teaching and learning projects I have facilitated during that time and my contribution to the management of the office itself. I am very lucky to be employed by an institution that has placed experiential education at the centre of its law school (Sylvester et al., 2004; Kerrigan & Murray, 2011). Perhaps Northumbria’s pre-university status as a polytechnic, devoted to vocational education, plays a part in our focus on practical skills and the law in the real world. But, beyond this, I suspect most of my colleagues would agree that bridging the academic and professional divide provides our students with a better educational experience and prepares them for the world of work. Whatever the reason, however, my focus on

experiential education has not done my career any harm. In fact, some might argue it has enhanced my prospects. Experiential learning, after all, appears prominently in my university's latest strategy document (Northumbria University, 2018c).

That said, it would be wrong to gloss over some difficulties I have had during my career. For much of my time at Northumbria Law School, the only Associate Professor in my immediate team was the Director of the Student Law Office. The rest of our team (of 4-8 members over the years) were Lecturers or Senior Lecturers. Rightly or wrongly, it looked like the only way to progress was to take on the mantle of Director. There were two problems with this course of action. First, there was an incumbent. Secondly, some of us – myself included – had no ambition to be Director. I wanted to be an Associate Professor, but I felt others were more interested in and better suited to directorial duties. There was a sense (again, some might say this was unfounded) that close association to the clinic meant that promotion opportunities were limited unless you removed yourself from the clinic environment and diversified. For me, this option was unthinkable.

Instead, having made an unsuccessful application for Associate Professor in 2015, I started to examine my working life with a greater sense of strategy. I mapped myself against the promotion criteria and spent the next two years growing my external reputation, increasing the number and quality of research outputs, and concentrating on projects that would enhance areas where I was lacking. The difference between my unsuccessful and successful applications are quite obvious when you put them side by side. I significantly reduced the detail about the day to day duties of clinical supervision. In fact, my successful application did not mention live cases in any depth at all. Out went references to the large social enterprises my students had provided thousands of pounds worth of free legal advice to. In came lists of esteem indicators, publications, and invited presentations. My successful application had one line about clinic supervision: “supervise business & commercial clinic team, including advising on casework & client care issues, sharing learning & teaching best practice, and creating opportunities for joint working e.g. blog, external events”.

I do not share this very personal information in order to criticise my institution's promotions policy. The feedback I received on my unsuccessful application has had a positive effect on my academic life. I needed to extend the reach of my work beyond Northumbria University. The push to produce better research has had profound implications for me personally as well as

professionally. The awards I have won have created opportunities beyond my imagination. I share my story because I am not sure if I would have received the same support elsewhere. It was precisely because of the acceptance of (and continuing drive towards) experiential education that my contribution to clinical legal education was credited. I have never led a module or programme. I have not sat on an exam board. I do not write suites of lectures. I have not created a set of multiple-choice questions, decided on a coursework topic, or prepared an exam. I am not an external examiner. According to academic ‘norms’, I have gaps in my curriculum vitae. Yet, I have not been marginalised. I do sometimes find it hard, however, to accept that the most substantial part of my working day had to be reduced to two lines in a CV so that I could demonstrate teaching excellence in line with the criterion at play. The unique nature of clinical teaching does not always translate into one-size-fits-all descriptors.

I cannot speak for all supervisors, but perhaps our position in academia (and I realise I am speaking from a place of privilege here) has had an impact on the way we express ourselves in the world. Many of the clinicians I know would revel in the idea of being viewed as poles apart to our “normal” (Holness, 2013, p. 336) non-clinic colleagues. For many, including myself, that difference is part of our professional identity. However, we need to ensure that our otherness does not have the undesirable effect of erasing our stories from the published literature on clinical supervision. We also need to challenge any further eradication of the law clinic supervisor as academic staff. Clinicians need to be given time and meaningful assistance to engage in research and be part of the discourse on clinical practice. Precarious or unfair employment contracts do not support the diverse and rich body of literature on clinical legal education our field deserves.

3.5.2 *The infancy of clinical scholarship*

The scholarship of clinical legal education is still in its infancy. *Clinical Law Review* was established in 1994. *The International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* celebrates its 20th anniversary next year. Compared to *Harvard Law Review* (est. 1887) or even *The Law Teacher* (est. 1967) clinical legal research has some ground to make up.

Whilst we have seen a growth in clinical scholarship (Santacroce et al., 2012), some clinicians have struggled with the move towards research. When Donnelly (2015) interviewed colleagues from my own clinic two years ago, he wrote about the “undeniable tension” (p. 35) that had

emerged between teaching and research. In the distant past, my colleagues and I had been given verbal assurances that we did not need to engage in research, at least not to the extent of other ‘research-focused’ staff in the law school. Times change. In their discussions with Donnelly, my fellow supervisors noted that they were now unlikely to be promoted based exclusively on their clinic work unless they had a track record in research (Donnelly, 2015). I have spoken to clinicians at other UK based law schools feeling similar pressures. Many talk to me about the requirement to produce research in the current climate, especially with REF 2021 on the horizon. Supervisors are also concerned about the “deleterious effects” (Donnelly, 2015, p. 20) production of research might have on the clinic itself. I am cognisant, however, that these feelings are not limited to clinic staff. Non-clinic colleagues who have not previously engaged in research may also feel the pressure to do so in the context of the REF 2021 and the changing landscape of Higher Education (Clarke, Knights & Jarvis, 2012; Naidoo, 2016).

The challenge is to support clinicians to engage in research they are interested in and which fits within their own workloads (rather than be another ‘job’ they need to fulfil on top of supervision). As Dunn’s (2017a) systematic review of clinical legal education scholarship in Europe has shown, not all clinicians are allocated time to research and many do not know how to start writing. As she notes, there is a clear need to provide support to clinicians to research *and* publish in quality journals.

3.5.3 *The dominance of traditional doctrinal research in the academy*

Despite developments in clinical scholarship, questions of academic rigour (or lack thereof) remain. Some supervisors have openly discussed the suspicion and derision with which their research has been treated by non-clinical law academics (Tyler & Catz, 1980; Eviator, 2002). Whilst there has been an “empirical turn” (Shaffer & Ginsberg, 2012, p. 1) in legal scholarship, in the main this has been focussed on socio-legal scenarios.

How can clinical scholars counter a narrative that still exists in some quarters where doctrinal research is positioned above pedagogic research? Santacroce et al (2012) argue that clinical faculty are well-positioned to identify legal issues “worthy of extensive critical analysis in traditional scholarship” (p. 123). They also note that when supervisors engage in, what they call, traditional legal scholarship, they bring “a different and valuable perspective” (2012, p. 123) to the academy. That may well be. However, it puts clinicians in the unenviable position of trying

to mould their research to fit the orthodox model.

To top it off, we are currently in an era where everything must be measured (Wolff, 2017). In the UK, this is perpetuated by the Research Excellence Framework (REF), a government-imposed system for assessing the quality of research in UK Higher Education Institutions. The REF has been fiercely criticised. For example, Derek Sayer, a Professor at Lancaster University, angrily wrote about the “intellectual horizons narrowed, imaginations cramped and “risky” work marginalised in the interests of maximising REF scores” (Sayer, 2014). According to Sayer, pressure to create 3* or 4* research (which is then rewarded with funding) drives what is researched and where it is published.

Where does this leave clinical legal education scholarship? And, rather selfishly, what about autoethnographic research into clinic? In a world where the field *and* the research method are marginalised, what hope do we have when faced with increasing gamification (Sparkes, 2007; Sayer, 2014; Wolff, 2017; Anonymous, 2019) of the REF? I can only speak from my own experience. This year, all my recent publications went through a peer review process to assess their quality against the REF criteria. I was worried. I had read the distressing accounts of ruined careers (Anonymous, 2019). I had winced at reports that 15% of academics surveyed by Research England had been asked to change the focus of their research to “accommodate” the REF (Pells, 2019), and wondered if I might suffer the same fate. Happily, this has not proven to be the case. My autoethnographic work in particular was singled out for praise. I bounced out of my REF meeting, positively determined to continue producing personal experience research into clinic.

I am not naïve. I know my experience might be poles apart in another institution. I am lucky to be supported by excellent mentors who nurture difference, and who have championed (at the highest levels) contemporary research on legal education alongside the more commonly known areas and methods. At the risk of sounding guileless and starry-eyed, I still believe that law clinic supervisors should continue to challenge the perceived dominance of traditional doctrinal research. We can, and do, make important contributions to the development of clinical pedagogy and research methods. Rather than attempting to conform to convention, let our clinical research strive to be “unruly, dangerous, vulnerable, rebellious, and creative” (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 433).

3.5.4 *A reticence to share personal stories in print*

The discussions in *A Teacher's Trouble* (Lerman, 1995) highlight how supervisors respond differently to potential challenges and risks. No one dilemma is the same, nor is there a universally accepted response (Lyman, 1995). The law clinic introduces students to "real, complicated, messy clients, enmeshed in their non-legal contexts" (Lyman, 1995, p. 219), but supervisors are equally faced with real, complicated, messy students bringing with them their own life experiences, pre-conceptions, and ambitions. Why then, with all its "traps and dangers" (Lyman, 1995, p. 229) are supervisors attracted to the role? Perhaps the answer lies in the "endless variations and complexity of human interaction" (Lyman, 1995, p. 229) supervision offers. The intricate nature of supervision may also be the reason why there are so few supervisors seeking to unpack their role in published personal narratives. I will revisit these ethical tensions in more depth in **Chapter 5**.

3.6 Concluding comments

This chapter has mapped the current knowledge of in-house university law clinic supervision, including the challenges faced by law clinic supervisors. I have argued that existing research into the supervisory experience is reliant on limited survey data and surface level reflections. Supervisors are failing to utilise contemporary autobiographical methods which require engagement with ambiguity and complexity. I have speculated on several possible reasons for this, including the early developmental stage of clinical legal education research and the treatment of supervisors as second-class colleagues. The challenge for supervisors wishing to explore the supervisory experience in first-person research will be to push against a narrative that clinic faculty are not normal, whilst doing research that does not fit within accepted 'norms'.

Chapter 4 RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA GENERATION, AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology used in this study, including research design, data generation, and method of analysis.

First, I introduce three key genres of autoethnography: evocative, analytic, and moderate. I make a considerable contribution to the debate on autoethnographic positioning by exploring where I position myself and this study. I go on to examine criticism of autoethnography as a method/ology. I answer questions relating to objectivity and generalisability and reflect on autoethnography's ability to give voice to hidden narratives and perspectives, including my own.

Next, I present an overview of how to do autoethnography and explain why and how I generated my autoethnographic data using a reflective diary. Finally, I justify my choice to use thematic analysis to analyse my autoethnographic data. I provide a micro-autoethnographic account (Collins, 2015) describing how I followed Braun & Clarke's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis to make sense of my data.

4.2 Classifying autoethnography: evocative, analytic, or moderate?

4.2.1 *Evocative autoethnography*

In *The Ethnographic I*, Ellis (2004) divides research into three categories: science, middle ground/realist, and arts & literature/impressionist/interpretive (**Figure 4.1**). According to Ellis (2004), positivist researchers taking an objective, neutral stance belong in 'science'. Those who privilege theory generation, but do not adhere rigidly to the rules of empiricism, fall into the 'middle ground'. Finally, researchers giving voice to people or stories traditionally left out of scientific discourse though emotional narrative come under 'arts & literature/impressionist/interpretive'. This final category represents the "interpretive, narrative, autoethnographic project" (2004, p. 30) Ellis advocates, often called evocative autoethnography.

Figure 4.1 *Ellis' (2004) three categorisations of research*

ELLIS' (2004) CATEGORISATIONS		
SCIENCE	MIDDLE GROUND/REALIST	ARTS & LITERATURE/IMPRESSIONIST OR INTERPRETIVE
<p>Positivistic researchers</p> <p>Objective, neutral stance</p> <p>Use of formal methods to produce knowledge and predict subsequent behaviors</p> <p>Aim to produce propositional knowledge about human behavior generalisable to specific populations</p> <p>Qualitative research seen as an extension of quantitative inquiry</p>	<p>Privilege theory generation, typicality, and generalization to a wider world over evocative storytelling</p> <p>Detail concrete experience, and multiple perspectives that include participant's voices & interpretations</p> <p>Do not adhere rigidly to the rules of empiricism</p> <p>Often work from a view of reality as objective and external, see themselves as neutral observers</p> <p>Emphasis on the generation of categories and theory from systematic coding and analysis</p>	<p>Seek to tell stories that show bodily, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual experience</p> <p>Four goals:</p> <p>i. Evoking emotional experience in readers</p> <p>ii. Giving voice to those traditionally left out of social scientific inquiry</p> <p>iii. Producing writing of high literary/artistic quality</p> <p>iv. Improving readers', participants' and authors' lives</p>

Importantly, in 2004, Ellis did not identify the 'arts & literature' category as evocative autoethnography. Indeed, two years later, Bochner revealed his disdain for labels such as evocative or emotional autoethnography (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). He saw evocation as "a goal, not a *type* of autoethnography" (*emphasis added*, Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 435).

How then has evocative autoethnography become the go-to phrase for autoethnographers wishing to distance their approach from positivist or realist traditions? I see two reasons. First, the word 'evocative' is highlighted in several key autoethnographic texts (see, for example, Ellis, 1997; Ellis, 2004). As Bochner says himself, it keeps "coming up" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 59). Secondly, the number of divergent terms for personal interpretive work is overwhelming. Ellis & Bochner (2003) list sixty-eight example phrases, including personal experience narratives, self-stories, first-person accounts, personal essays, ethnographic short stories, auto-pathography, emotionalism, experiential texts, sociopoetics, and postmodern ethnography. Stylish phrases like "heartful" (Ellis, 1999, p. 669) autoethnography have also appeared. 'Evocative autoethnography' acts as a catch-all.

Despite initial reservations, even Bochner appears to have embraced 'evocative autoethnography' as a label. His latest book, co-authored with Ellis and published in 2016, is

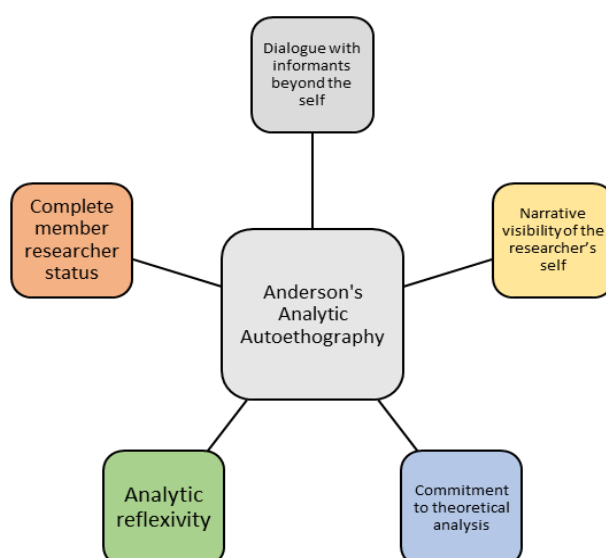
called *Evocative Autoethnography: Writing Lives and Telling Stories*. The marketing information on the back of the book positions it as “the first to introduce evocative autoethnography as a methodology and a way of life in the human sciences” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016). Bochner & Ellis still see evocation as a goal. However, the existence of the book illustrates the extent to which evocative autoethnography has been adopted as a type of autoethnography.

4.2.2 Analytic autoethnography

Evocative autoethnography is often viewed as the quintessence of the methodology. However, this assumption has not gone unchallenged. In an engaging debate published in the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, Anderson (2006a) argued that the dominance of evocative autoethnography had “obscured” (p. 373) the acknowledgement of autoethnographic research compatible with traditional ethnographic practices. Despite praising the “impressive success” (2006a, p. 374) of the advocacy for evocative autoethnography, he noted that it had unintentionally eclipsed “other visions” (2006a, p. 374) of what autoethnography could be. Anderson wanted to produce an alternative autoethnographic consistent with traditional qualitative inquiry. He called his vision the “analytic autoethnographic paradigm” (2006a, p. 374).

Anderson’s (2006a) analytic autoethnography is synonymous with Ellis’ (2004) middle ground/realist category. Anderson himself proposes analytic autoethnography as a “viable and valuable subgenre in the realist ethnographic tradition” (2006a, p. 378). The five key features of analytic autoethnography are illustrated in **Figure 4.2**. Put simply, the analytic autoethnographer is (1) a full member in the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in published texts, and (3) committed to developing a theoretical understanding of broader social phenomenon (Anderson, 2006a).

Figure 4.2 *Five key features of analytic autoethnography, according to Anderson (2006a).*



Anderson (2006a) commended the “energy, creativity, and enthusiasm” (p. 374) of evocative autoethnographers. Atkinson (2006), however, is less generous. Writing in the same issue of the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, Atkinson applauds Anderson’s (2006a) work as a “corrective” (2006, p. 400) to a “number of tendencies” (2006, p. 400) in autoethnographic research. According to Atkinson (2006), autoethnography needs rescuing. He bemoans the loss of analytic and theoretical traditions to the “contemporary fashions” (2006, p. 400) of evocative work.

Interestingly, Atkinson’s (2006) article was supposed to be a critical exploration of Anderson’s (2006a) proposal. However, rather than the diagnostic intended, it is, as he notes, “more of a continuation” (2006, p. 400) of Anderson’s arguments. I am not surprised. Just over a decade earlier, Atkinson argued that narrative was a problem when it transcended “the realm of analytic methodology” to become “a surrogate form of liberal humanism and a romantic celebration of the individual subject” (1997, p. 335). The narrative turn, according to Anderson (1997), leads researchers down a blind alley.

Burnier’s (2006) reaction to Anderson’s (2006a) proposal is more hesitant. As a political scientist, Burnier bemoans the “deep absence” (2006, p. 412) of the personal in her field. She is, therefore, drawn to a division between evocative and analytic autoethnography because the

latter might find more favour within the traditions of political science. However, Burnier also worries that splitting autoethnography into two distinct genres would result in the loss of the “both...and” (2006, p. 414) features which attracted her to autoethnographic research. For Burnier (2006), autoethnography - when it is done well - is both personal and scholarly, evocative and analytical, and descriptive and theoretical. She is left “in two minds” (2006, p. 417) about Anderson’s attempt to establish distinct kinds of autoethnography. I suspect other scholars might experience the conflict so eloquently described by Burnier.

4.2.3 Moderate autoethnography

The debate has often been framed as evocative versus analytic autoethnography. However, Stahlke Wall (2016) proposes a third paradigm which she coins ‘moderate’ autoethnography. While acknowledging the “unique value” (2016, p. 1) of personal experience, Stahlke Wall queries whether all autoethnographies contribute to scholarly discourse. She notes that some autoethnographic research in the *Handbook of Autoethnography* “show us a formless, evocative, literary method that, in the end, bears little or no resemblance to its ethnographic origins and is ambiguous in its contributions” (2016, p. 7). Stahlke Wall argues that it may not always be “appropriate” (2016, p. 6) to label poetry and stories as autoethnography, however beautiful or engaging they may be. As unanalysed texts, they are “not systematic, do not link personal experience with cultural issues, and do not explicitly critique or even identify the discourses they wish to challenge” (2016, p. 6). Instead, she wants autoethnography that “captures the meaning and events of one life in an ethical way but also in a way that moves collective thinking forward” (2016, p. 7). Moderate autoethnography allows for creativity and innovation. However, it also strives for rigour, quality, and usefulness.

When I read Stahlke Wall’s (2016) argument for moderate autoethnography, I was struck by its resemblance to the lyrical approach to criminology practised by Wakeman (2014). Historically, criminology has been fixated with its positivist roots, effectively discouraging “any form of biographical or emotional intrusion by the researcher” (Jewkes, 2012, p. 65). It has neutralised the “complex human relationships, potentially dangerous situations, and emotionally charged topics” (Jewkes, 2012, p. 63) criminologists frequently engage with. Lyrical criminology, conceived by Abbott (2007), is a middle ground; the goal is to enable readers to feel their way to understandings through emotional engagement and “analytic, yet stylized data” (Wakeman, 2014, p. 705). Wakeman confirmed this approach in a conversation we had on social media. I

asked if he would label his autoethnography as analytic, or both analytic and evocative. He replied, "both, but stress analytic agenda. For me it's about answering the social question through the self, ea [evocative autoethnography] sometimes lacks that" (Wakeman, 2016). Moderate autoethnography could be viewed as a happy medium between evocative autoethnography, as imagined by Bochner & Ellis (2016), and analytic autoethnography, as designed by Anderson (2006a).

4.2.4 *Is my autoethnographic study evocative, analytic, or moderate?*

Initially, Ellis & Bochner responded forcefully to Anderson's (2006a) thesis. They rejected analytic autoethnography as "just another genre of realist ethnography" (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 433). Interestingly, they felt Anderson's work contained a "hidden agenda" (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 433) to turn autoethnography "into mainstream ethnography" (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 433).

I can understand Ellis & Bochner's concerns, especially when Anderson was commended for his "agenda to bring autoethnographic studies back to their analytic roots" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 397). Perhaps this is why there is something of the 'them and us' to Ellis & Bochner's reaction:

"We think of ethnography as a journey; they think of it as a destination. They want to master, explain, grasp [...] We want to dwell in the flux of lived experience; they want to appropriate lived experience for the purpose of abstracting something they call knowledge or theory" (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 431).

10 years later, however, their reflections on Anderson's (2006a) paper reveal a shift in perspective. Bochner, in particular, queries whether, he was overreacting at the time. He concludes: "perhaps I was" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 62). Bochner still continues to distance his and Ellis' work from "story analysts" who "eschew both the 'art' of 'he(art)-ful' autoethnography and its value centeredness" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 62), but he also acknowledges that they are "thrilled" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 63) at the "escalated and expanded" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 63) world of autoethnography.

Autoethnography finds itself in a strange position. On one hand, it is hailed as the "obvious successor to discredited ethnographic modes" (Buzard, 2003, p. 61). On the other, it is subject

to constant examination as to its rightful design. Over time, the debate has been reduced to a, seemingly simple, question: are you an evocative or analytic (or moderate) autoethnographer? For me, this question perpetuates the misguided notion that (a) autoethnography can be placed into neat categories, and (b) each autoethnographer is required to choose a tribe.

When it comes to autoethnography, it is all too easy to generalise. One could presume, for example, that autoethnographers identifying with the evocative tradition entirely reject the inclusion of analysis and would discourage others from taking this path. That is not the case. Two years before Anderson's (2006a) paper, Ellis wrote that she was "more open" (Ellis, 2004, p. 44) to including traditional analysis with story. In her (fictional) autoethnography class, one of Ellis' (fictional) students reflects on her preference for analysing stories rather than writing creatively. Rather than dismiss her way of doing autoethnography altogether, Ellis tells the student: "Then, that's the way you should do it" (Ellis, 2004, p. 45). Ellis acknowledges that evocative autoethnography can be analysed, although she follows up with the caveat that "the story itself should always occupy a dominant position" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 186). Equally, whilst Anderson remains "committed to an analytic model of autoethnographic writing" (Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013, p. 64), his more recent work (Anderson, 2011; Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013) seems to embrace evocative forms (Bochner & Ellis, 2016).

I would not want to prevent anyone from identifying with a specific faction, be it evocative, analytic, or moderate autoethnography. Like Bochner & Ellis (2016), I have no desire to "police" (p. 63) autoethnography. However, I do not believe that we should be forced to choose one genre over the other. I agree with Vryan's (2006) argument that "a distinction between analysis and creative or evocative first-person writing styles is unnecessary and counterproductive, as are implications that an analytical project must avoid delving too much, too expressively, or exclusively in the autoethnographer's experience" (p. 407).

On the surface, my study appears to be an example of Anderson's (2006a) analytic autoethnography. I am clearly analysing data and engaging in analytic reflexivity. As a law clinic supervisor, I am a complete member researcher of the social world under study. I am also, as Anderson puts it, "visible, active, and reflexively engaged in the text" (2006a, p. 383). However, Anderson has two further requirements: to engage in dialogue with informants beyond the self, and to commit to an analytic agenda. I am not convinced this study meets these final constraints.

I have struggled to work out exactly what Anderson intended by the phrase 'engaging in a dialogue' with others. At first, I took his words at face value and presumed he meant including other people's stories in the autoethnography. However, I later queried whether I had misread his intentions as towards the end of his article he goes on to refer to dialogue with others *or* data. I have data in the form of my diary entries and for a while I played with the idea that I had indeed fulfilled another of Anderson's (2006a) requirements for analytic autoethnography. Later though, in a follow-up paper, Anderson talks explicitly about the need for dialogic encounters with "other social actors" (2006b, p. 456) beyond the self. His references to data are limited to data obtained from others. He argues this provides "different perspectives that can challenge and enrich the researcher's own perspective and deepen analytic insights" (2006b, p. 456). My study cannot be labelled analytic autoethnography, as Anderson (2006a; 2006b) sees it.

Anderson does not, of course, have the final word on what is (and what is not) analytic autoethnography. Like me, Vryan (2006) disagrees with the requirement for data from other people. Vryan's dissertation was "largely autoethnographic, partially evocative, and highly analytical" (2006, p. 406). He chose to include interviews from other people alongside official records and accounts. However, he argues that if he had decided to draw exclusively on his own experience, it would have been possible to engage in effective analysis and still call his research analytic autoethnography.

Vryan (2006) leans towards analysis and is comfortable calling his work analytic autoethnography, even though it might not exhibit all the features Anderson (2006a; 2006b) deems necessary. This brings me to Anderson's final feature, and the issue I struggle with most. Even if I decided to follow Vryan (2006) and reject Anderson's requirement for external data from other people, I would still feel some discomfort identifying as an analytic autoethnographer. I cannot, as Anderson would have me, commit to an analytic agenda. I want the freedom to move up and down the spectrum. I do not want to pigeonhole myself as a particular 'type' of autoethnographer.

In truth, my reticence to identify myself with analytic autoethnography also rests on more emotive matters. I greatly admire those who gave rise to modern autoethnography's existence. The path they tread has provided me with the opportunity to pursue non-conventional research which accords with the way I understand knowledge construction. I am drawn to and have been affected by many autoethnographic works written in the evocative tradition, containing little or

no explicit analysis. To label my work simply as analytic autoethnography almost feels like a betrayal of the evocative research I have engaged with. And so I find myself with a sense of guilt that I see merit in Anderson (2006a; 2006b), Atkinson (2006), and Stahlke Wall's (2016) arguments for autoethnography that looks to analysis and theory-building.

I considered, for quite some time, whether to nail my colours to the mast and declare myself a moderate autoethnographer; a lyrical educationalist, if you will. I want to write like Ellis. But I also identify with Ellis' (fictional) student, who is "more comfortable analyzing stories than writing *solely* in the creative mode" (*emphasis added*, Ellis, 2004, p. 45). The mix of analysis and creativity I am drawn to seems to be at the heart of the middle ground of moderate autoethnography.

I see the benefits of choosing a 'team'. It is simpler, neater and easier to stomach if I make a declaration one way or another. Ultimately, however, I return to my point about the spectrum and my desire to explore all genres of autoethnography as befits the context of the research. When I came to investigate the reconstruction of my identity during and after a period of mental health illness (Campbell, 2018), I used evocative autoethnography to evoke an emotional experience in the reader and raise awareness of depression and anxiety in academia. In this thesis, on the other hand, I am seeking to analyse, quite systematically, data I have produced using a diary. I would not want to stop doing one in favour of the other. I sometimes wonder if I am looking to practice a multi-layered or mixed approach to autoethnography. But then, of course, I'm going back to labels again.

4.3 Have I chosen an analytic approach in order to lend credibility to this study?

4.3.1 Criticism of autoethnography

Autoethnography is growing in popularity but remains a controversial methodology. The most vociferous critique comes from Delamont (2007, 2009, 2012) who characterises autoethnography as "an intellectual *cul de sac*" (2009, p. 51) and "an abrogation of the honourable trade of the scholar" (2009, p. 61). Delamont is not a lone voice. Fine (1999) also finds fault in "personal reminiscences" (p. 533), preferring more "powerful and secure knowledge" (p. 533). Sanders (1999) rallies against "artsy-craftsy literary exercises" (p.672) typically featuring "overwrought autobiographical sad stories about how hard things are or were for the writer" (p. 672). Sanders

(1999) encourages those writers to "suck it up" (p. 672). Alternatively, he suggests, their work might find a home in magazines (Sanders, 1999). Inadvertently (or perhaps not), Sanders joins critics who repeatedly call autoethnographers "journalists" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 8).

Interestingly, the loudest noises against autoethnography appear to emanate from ethnographers. Ethnography is an accepted research method today, but there was a time where ethnographers struggled to publish their research in leading journals (Fine, 1999). Promotion was also unlikely (Fine, 1999). Fine (1999) recalls the need for "steely diligence" (p.532) throughout this "dour situation" (p. 532). Given the clear parallels with the rise of autoethnography, I have queried why ethnographers have questioned the validity of autoethnography (Campbell, 2017a). I wonder whether the answer lies in Fine's (1999) comment that realist ethnography has been "placed on the defensive" (p. 532) as a consequence of being labelled "naive, old-fashioned and quaint" (p. 532). This may be the perception critics have of autoethnographers. However, I am yet to find an autoethnographer who has called out ethnography, or other forms of qualitative research, in this way.

4.3.2 Absence of objectivity and generalisability in autoethnography

Autoethnography's detractors are often entertainingly expressive. My personal favourite criticism of autoethnography is that it is akin to "diddling one's own pet hamster" (Campbell, 2017a). However, if you look beyond the wordplay, two common accusations emerge. First, autoethnography is said to be invalid because it lacks objectivity. Secondly, as autoethnographic research cannot be generalised it is indicted as unscientific and useless. Some might imagine that, faced with this criticism, I have – purposefully or sub-consciously - chosen an analytic approach in order to lend a sense of credibility to this study. This is not the case. Even through an analytic lens, my research is ultimately subjective and I will not be generalising from it. In this section, I explain why I have taken this approach.

Objectivity in social research is a principle drawn from positivism (Bryman, 1988, 2016), put forward to ensure research findings depend on the nature of what was studied rather than on the researcher's personality, beliefs, and values (Payne & Payne, 2004). As Ellingson & Ellis (2008) remind us, being subjective (or biased, as it can also be called) commits "the worst of the deadly sins" (p. 452) within a positivist worldview. Subjectivity is seen as a contaminant (Krieger, 1991). The researcher's personal experiences are therefore dirty, foul, and corrupt their research.

Generalisability dictates that research findings should be able to be applied to wider populations. The notion of generalisation in qualitative research has attracted much debate. Myers (2000), for example, accepts that qualitative studies are not generalizable, but argues their “redeeming qualities” (p. 1) set them above such requirements. Stenbacka (2001), on the other hand, openly criticises accepted quality indicators and suggests the use of alternative concepts when pursuing qualitative research. Despite these interesting arguments, adherence to traditional notions of validity persist. This is perhaps best embodied by Morse’s (1999) declaration that, without generalisability, qualitative research is “of little use, insignificant, and hardly worth doing” (p. 5).

Autoethnography emerged from “an impulse to create ground-level, intimate, and close-up perspectives on experience” (Adams et al., 2015, p. 23). Rather than banish or limit subjectivity, autoethnography embraces it. Many autoethnographers explicitly identify how their identities, observations, and experiences have influenced what they have chosen to study and the research process. Haynes (2013), for example, prominently foregrounds her subjectivity:

“...rather than making claims of objectivity and passivity in the observation and interpretation of my experiences, I acknowledge both are informed by my political views, subjectivity, hindsight and subsequent theorising” (p. 383).

I do the same here. Like Ellingson (1998), I say, joyfully, that this study is “thoroughly contaminated” (p. 94) by my own social and personal experiences. Contamination in this context is to be celebrated as bountiful, intricate, and sumptuous. It has resulted in a rich understanding of the complex nature of my lived reality as a law clinic supervisor, the emotional reactions I experience in this setting, and the multifaceted challenges I face. I am not interested in producing detached, emotionless research that aims to give a neutral account applicable to all law clinic supervisors. Instead, I have turned to autoethnography, using myself as primary data, and engaged in a deliberate and deep exploration of my professional life.

If I am not being objective, and my findings are far from generalisable, then is this study truly research? The answer lies in my epistemological standpoint and the claims I am making. As a reflectivist, I find meaning in emotions and narrative. I believe that social sciences are, as Richardson (1990) puts it, “ineluctably tied to the human experience” (p. 21). My research question does not ask ‘what can autoethnography reveal about law clinic supervisors?’. I am

certainly not claiming that my findings reflect how all clinical legal educators feel, understand, or see the world. Rather, I want to know what autoethnography can reveal about *my* experience as a supervisor. This does not mean that my research sits alone; useless, and invalid. On the contrary, I want my fellow supervisors to engage with my study and for it to prompt consideration of their own identities, emotions, relationships, and practice.

I am influenced by Ellis' (2004) argument that if we are going to use traditional parlance like generalisability, we must re-conceptualise what that means for our interpretive research. In autoethnography, Ellis (2004) claims, generalisability can be tested - but not in the traditional sense of random sampling. Instead, readers are constantly testing a story, determining if it speaks to them about their experiences. This is not as maverick as it may seem. Ellis is in fact drawing on Stake's (1978, 1994; Stake & Trumbell, 1982) concept of naturalistic generalisation which first appeared in the 1970s in relation to case study research. Unlike objective scientific generalisation, naturalistic generalisation develops within a reader as a product of their own experience (Stake, 1978). Applying this to autoethnography, a reader is not looking for a section that tells them how the story applies generically to a population. Instead, they are constantly determining if the narrative resonates (or not) with their own experience.

When I am asked how my autoethnographic research is objective, I say it is not. The follow-up question usually concerns how I am going to make my autoethnographic research generalisable. I say I am not (or at least not in the way the questioner means). It has taken me some time to be able to stand in front of an audience and make these pronouncements. Today, I have an established position. I can put my argument across calmly and with confidence. However, this has not always been the case. In Campbell (2017a), I wrestled with the tensions I felt about autoethnography as valid research. I wanted to argue that autoethnographic practice was science, sitting alongside studies that followed the traditional orthodoxy, but I also eschewed traditional notions of validity, objectivity, and generalisability. I wrote at the time:

"Some days I pursue validity through scientific "status". Other days validity is a false icon. In this middle place, wanting to be part of the club but then rejecting externally-imposed criterion, I embody the impossible struggle of attempting to "do" the "right" research" (Campbell, 2017a, paragraph 49).

I suspect I will continue to be asked questions about autoethnography's validity as research throughout the rest of my career. I welcome the discussion. A continuing conversation about the place of autoethnography can, in my view, only contribute to our understanding of the variety of ways knowledge is constructed. I do, however, sympathise with Gingrich-Philbrook's (2005) decision not to engage with questions of validity at all. He says, somewhat fervently:

"I swear to God, if I read one more essay attempting to justify the presence of the self in writing to the patriarchal council of self-satisfied social scientists I'll, well, I could say "Scream" or "Go to Wal-Mart after all," but I think I'll let it go with this, I think I'll put it this way: "If I read one more essay blah blah blah, I think I'll put it down" (p. 311).

Gingrich-Philbrook (2005) wants autoethnographers to stop craving "Daddy's approval" (p. 311). Yet, both positivists and interpretivists (and others who identify differently) will have questions about autoethnography and how it fits within qualitative inquiry. I respect Gingrich-Philbrook's position. However, when we put a piece of research into the public domain questions will follow. Autoethnographers must be ready to answer the points raised.

4.3.3 Autoethnography's ability to give voice to hidden or ignored perspectives

Those who preach strict adherence to canonical forms of doing and writing research have been criticised as promulgating "a White, masculine, heterosexual, middle/upper-classed, Christian, able-bodied perspective" (Ellis et al., 2011, paragraph 4). Autoethnography, in contrast, offers a forum for experiences traditionally left out of traditional discourse. Autoethnographic practice and writing appeals strongly to persons of colour, women, and LGBTQ+ researchers (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a). Researchers who have experienced bullying (Vickers, 2007), sexual abuse (Rambo Ronai, 1995, 1997), and addiction (Grant, 2010b) also frequently find a home in autoethnography. The stories are often difficult to read. Autoethnographies of child sexual abuse are particularly disturbing. Bridgens (2007) argues, however, that, through autoethnography, experiences "which are ignored, distorted or silenced because of the discomfort they cause, can become known and understood" (p. 4). She recalls that narratives of childhood polio, immigration, and being hidden as a child during the Holocaust were ignored for years because no-one asked about them. Survivors felt they "had no story" (2007, p. 5). Of course, this was not the case. But, as Bridgens (2007) asks, "who finally recognises and tells

these stories?" (p. 4). Autoethnography helps "give a voice to the voiceless" (Short, Turner, & Grant, 2013, p. xi).

I am a white, heterosexual, middle-class, physically non-disabled woman, raised in a working-class household aligned to Christian morality. I cannot speak to the experience of a person of colour or a person living with a physical impairment. I am employed as an Associate Professor in a developed, capitalist country. I clearly have privilege. How, then, is my story hidden or silenced? Above all, I write as a woman. I know a significant number of women who supervise law students in university law clinics. Clinical legal education conferences I attend have a high proportion of women. Out of the 184 delegates who attended the 2017 International Journal of Clinical Legal Education, approximately 110 were women. This academic year, in my own clinic, 65% of our supervisors are women. Yet, the Google Scholar search for 'clinical legal education' I conducted on 4 April 2018 shows a field of scholarship dominated by men. In the list of the 10 most cited and relevant articles, only three are authored by women (Tarr, 1993; Phan, 2005; Tokarz, Cook, Brooks & Bratton Blom, 2008). The top four articles (Grossman, 1974; Bloch, 1982; Amsterdam, 1984; Milstein, 2001) are written by men.

As a woman, I am a marginal voice. I am far from represented in clinical legal education discourse. Whilst it is not my intention to focus in any depth on gender in this thesis, it is important to acknowledge my perspective as a woman and the part it has played in my choice of research method. My story has never been told. I have not been asked to recount my experience as a supervisor as part of an interview. I have not been observed by an ethnographer researching clinical life. I have received no request to complete a survey about my role as a supervisor. Through autoethnography, taking a subjective non-generalisable view, I am able to make my invisible narrative visible (Short et al., 2013).

4.4 Generating autoethnographic data

4.4.1 *How can you 'do' autoethnography?*

Autoethnography is recognised as a method as well as a methodology (Reed-Danahay, 1997; Adams et al., 2015). Nevertheless, detailed guidance on how to 'do' autoethnography is hard to find. Indeed, Wall (2006) came to wonder whether autoethnography was "less of a method and more of a philosophy" (p.152) due to the "highly abstract" (p. 152) guidance on autoethnographic

practice. I understand Wall's frustration. There is no straightforward, one-size-fits-all instruction manual. When I set out on my autoethnographic journey, I was puzzled by the lack of specificity. Today, however, I have come to appreciate the modes of inquiry available to researchers interested in the autoethnographic method. Autoethnographers have a great deal of choice, from performance poetry (Spry, 2001) to meticulously produced field notes (Chang, 2008).

For evocative autoethnographers, focus is centred on making sense of fieldwork through story (Adams et al., 2015). In their book, *Autoethnography*, Adams, Ellis & Holman Jones (2015) recommend "starting where you are and finding yourself in story" (p. 67). Similarly, much of Bochner & Ellis' (2016) *Evocative Autoethnography* is devoted to the art of crafting stories. Their textbook provides in-depth guidance on constructing a story, including character, setting, and time, active and passive voice, and the difference between showing and telling. Advice on writing dialogue, choosing a narrative voice, and shaping plot are also available to would-be and established autoethnographers in *Autoethnography* (Adams et al., 2015).

Stories can, of course, be represented in several forms. Examples include poetry (Wyatt, 2016), poetic-narrative (Hanauer, 2012), novel (Ellis, 2004), drama-dialogue (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a), and personal narrative (Adams, 2006). But dividing autoethnography into different 'categories' is fraught with complication. Autoethnographies can include a diverse range of components. Take Tillman-Healy's (1996) exploration of bulimia, for example. Her autoethnography is composed of poetry, narrative, and dialogue. Each element combines and entwines to produce a larger whole; the rendering of a secret life with an eating disorder. Some autoethnographic stories cannot be categorised at all. Mackinlay's (2015) "playful, performative, and poetic" (p. 189) paper, engaging with the writings of Cixous and Woolf, is a notable example. As Mackinlay (2015) notes, in her article the boundaries between "whose words and whose writing... are fluid, liminal, in-between and slippery" (p. 198). This is especially true where she creates a conversation between Cixous and Woolf using their own texts. It is a challenging piece, and difficult to classify. When I first read it, I wrote on my physical copy of the article that it was 'creative hard, rather than creative fun'.

How to create your story? Ellis (2004) recommends taking retrospective field notes, including all the details that can be recalled. The notes should be organised chronologically first, followed by a process of daily construction to fill in new memories. "Remember", Ellis says, "you are

creating the story; it is not there waiting to be found” (2004, p. 117). Some autoethnographers prefer to make synchronous notes, as the events occur. Journals and diaries are therefore a popular means of constructing autoethnography (Vickers, 2002; Campbell, 2018). Autoethnographies can include verbatim sections from personal diaries and reflective journals (Jago, 2002; Campbell, 2018). Others use journals and field notes to construct fictionalised accounts (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009).

Analytic autoethnographers, like Chang (2008), also speak of collecting “personal memory data” (p. 71) or “self-observational and self-reflective data” (p. 89). However, traditional forms of social science inquiry loom large. This is evident when autoethnographic data collection is equated to ethnographic participant observation. Chang (2008), for example, promotes systematic self-observation as a data collection technique. Drawing on Rodriguez & Ryave (2002), she recommends planning what to observe, how to observe, and when to observe. For example, autoethnographers could plan to record certain behaviours or thoughts at certain time periods or intervals in a pre-formatted time sheet immediately after they occur (Chang, 2008).

Once again, I return to the spectrum of autoethnographic ‘genres’. Those aligned to the evocative tradition, find it difficult, if not impossible, to “separate *doing* autoethnography from *writing* autoethnography” (*original emphasis*, Adams et al., 2015, p. 67); telling stories of self through culture. As Ellis (2004) notes, “If you’re writing about an epiphany, which you usually are in this kind of research, you may be too caught up in living it to write about it” (p. 116). At the other end of the scale, analytic autoethnographers detail precise strategies for chronicling and inventorying data, and view data analysis and interpretation as the “crux” (Chang, 2008, p. 89) of (auto)ethnography. Duncan (2004), for example, took a “conservative autoethnographic approach” (p. 11) when she collected “reflections-in-action” (p. 6) consisting of handwritten entries, averaging two A4 pages each, created twice weekly over a 1-year period.

Then there are multiple examples of autoethnographies that exist somewhere in the middle. Many autoethnographies combine story with commentary (Jago, 2002; Adams, 2009). Vickers (2007) offers “a series of contemporaneous file notes and correspondence written many years ago” (p.223) alongside “interpretive, sensemaking commentary” (p. 223). Haynes (2006, 2011, 2013) uses first-person vignettes, interwoven with “reflections on observations and emotions” (2013, p. 382). Even evocative autoethnographers do not dismiss the use of field notes. Ellis (2004) notes that “if you want to claim you’re following traditional rules of ethnographic

method” (p. 116), then it would be best to keep notes as events occurred and then write from those.

4.4.2 Why choose a reflective diary?

Given the myriad of autoethnographic modes of inquiry, why choose a reflective diary? The answer lies in my research question. I wanted to understand the lived reality of my experience as a supervisor at a university law clinic. If you were to ask me right now about my experiences, I could recall incidents and feelings. But the details might be lacking, the hard edges blurred. My mind might go back to a fuzzy recollection of a particularly difficult interaction. Or perhaps I would conflate events, treating many distinct episodes as if they were one. Rather than rely on “casually recalled and accounted memories” (Chang, 2008, p. 61), I needed to externalise and capture my inner dialogue as I went about my working day. A diary provided a place where insights, not always directly observable, could be recorded.

The roots of the modern-day diary can be traced back to a 14th Century system of account keeping (Bailey, 2016). Florentine merchants kept ‘*libri di famiglia*’ (family books) - extensions to their household accounts (Bailey, 2016). Perhaps one of the most famous diarists Samuel Pepys was the Royal Navy’s leading administrator and keeper of its books. Bailey (2016), in her book about the history of the diary, speculates that Pepys was a good diarist exactly because his professional life required him to be a good accountant.

I too wonder whether I have been drawn to diary writing because of my career as a commercial lawyer. Many solicitors love the fast paced, unpredictable nature of contentious work - defending and prosecuting, negotiating, and making deals. That was never for me. In contrast, my practice area required long hours in solitude creating meticulously drafted documents. My work was behind the scenes, writing and re-writing clear and effective commercial agreements. I am not afraid to be alone with a document.

The use of a reflective diary also makes sense given where I position myself on the autoethnographic spectrum. In the context of this study, I required a mechanism that enabled me to capture the nuances, complexity, and emotions of my supervisory life. But I also wanted to analyse my story. I felt that diary entries would shed light on my vulnerable self, evoking -

with intimate detail - my human experience. They would also allow for engagement with analytic reflexivity.

Some colleagues have suggested that I chose a diary to give my autoethnographic research a sense of acceptability. "*It's more credible, isn't it?*", they say. "*At least you have proper data*". I can see how some might view my use of a written record as an attempt to lend a veneer of credibility to a methodology derided as an "armchair pleasure" (Fine, 1999, p. 534). I have created content that can be analysed. I appear to be following traditional ethnographic practice. I suspect it would be easier for me to cling to this and press the argument that my research has greater validity through my use of my diary. I could, like Jenks (2002), repeatedly assert that my diary brings "autoethnographic credibility" (p. 184). However, this is not my view. Autoethnography already suffers from its depiction as the soft and fluffy side of research (if it is accepted as research at all). If we start to suggest that only conventionally packaged forms of autoethnography have validity, we simply re-affirm the notion that legitimate qualitative research must conform to dominant, widely accepted norms.

I am uneasy using the term credibility, because this suggests 'good' research should be reliable and objective. I do not believe any form of research, quantitative or qualitative, can truly lack subjectivity or be utterly reliable. Each researcher brings, consciously or not, their own emotional, internal lens through which they view the world. I chose a diary because it made sense in terms of this particular study, not because I was chasing credibility.

4.4.3 My diary: creating the diary

For my diary, I created a simple blank document in Microsoft Word. I altered the page orientation from portrait to landscape. Landscape orientation gave more space for my words to cross the page and looked more like a book. I also knew I would be returning to the document repeatedly and did not want to view it as another article or piece of academic writing. I wanted the document to be both appealing and 'other'. Even now, when I read extracts from the diary the look and feel is entirely different to other Word documents I am working on. **Figure 4.3** contains an extract from the start of the diary.

In line with the ethical approval (**Appendix 6**) I received for my study, my diary was saved to a university drive. I was only able to access the diary at work, via my work PC, or at home, via my

home laptop through the Citrix remote working application connecting me to the university servers.

Figure 4.3 *An extract from the start of my diary*

DIARY (7 OCTOBER 2015 – 12 APRIL 2016)

7 October 15 (after first firm meeting)

Kicking myself for a rubbish firm meeting. Have so many teaching ideas and then I just do a sit and chat. Tomorrow's meeting will be so much better but is that fair to the students today? And what do I do with them next week? Why didn't I just do what I wanted to do? Because I didn't have a board marker? Because it was easier? Probably because I had been so held up and not prepared at all, even though I was prepared 2 weeks ago. Feel like a bad teacher.

If I had given the enquiry out – would that have enthused them more? Now I am stuck with a first come first served system. I could have given the enquiry out and then spread out the work between the firm. But then would a client want to come in for three different advice interviews. Or would it be fair to the ones who did get an advice interview and those who didn't? I long for the days when we had enquiries for everyone – and I had more students then! We do more marketing, more media – why do we have so few enquiries?

11 October 15

The Winter Break. Each year, students are told that their term ends on a certain date. This is usually two weeks before our office shuts for a few days. So what do you do when your students want to go home, or on holiday? The only question that came up in the firm meeting. That feeling of dread and inevitability that this is going to creep back up on you. And then the weekend email saying that they're going away before the break. Is that ok? Well, not really. A sickening feeling. An angry feeling. Is it taken seriously? Is the role – advising a real client – understood? What does it mean? What are you thinking? Then the calm. Why am I getting upset about this? Why does this keep popping up in my head in moments of silence when walking around town. Why, a day later is this still there. Gnawing away. I think of the stress if the client wants or needs to come in for advice during the weeks they are away. I think of my role – responsibility to the client, responsibility to the student. I think of the student. Other things in their life. Family commitments. I think of what I'm going to say. "Well, I can't make you be a university but... but it might affect your assessment (ominous, threatening), but it might affect you being able to advise the client..., but we don't know what's going to happen and what will you do if the client needs to be advised that week?" But then we don't even have any clients yet. So it's just worry. Gnawing worry. What would others do? Some would be strict and say it like it is – you're here to do a module, you have a responsibility. I don't want to do that. Because what happens if the work is done and it makes no difference? My biggest concern is that the cases aren't here and we don't get things moving along and then everything is delayed. Gnawing worry and irritation.

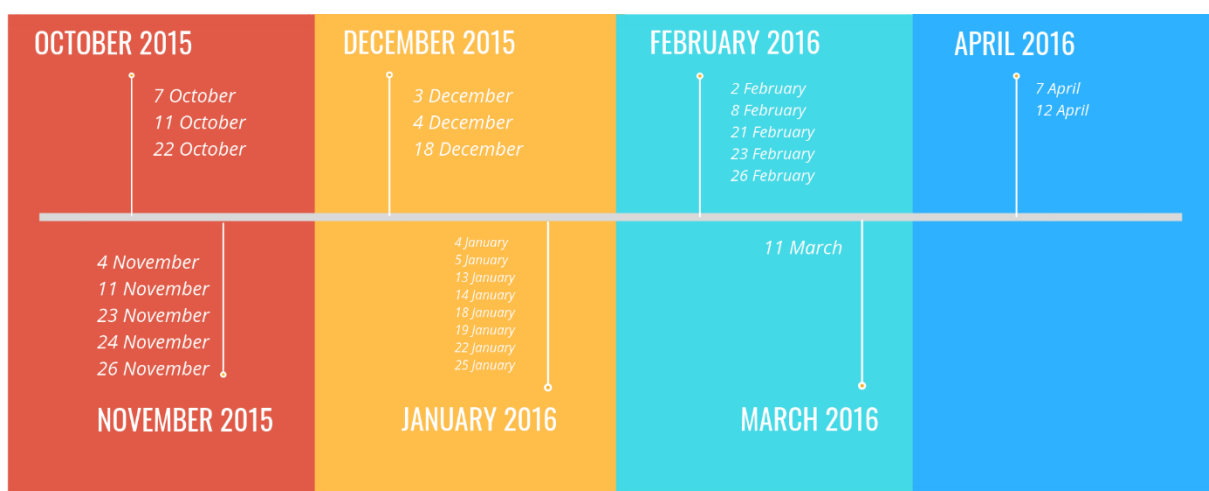
A copy of my diary (7 October 2015 – 12 April 2016) is available at **Appendix 1**. The diary has been cleaned in order to alter and/or remove references to individuals other than myself. Full details of my approach to relational ethics can be found in **Chapter 5**.

4.4.4 *My diary: when to write?*

The open flexibility of autoethnography means that there is little guidance on when you should write in your diary. For this reason, Chang's (2008) chapter on the collection of self-observational and self-reflective data stands out. She has a number of suggestions, including structured "interval recordings" (2008, p. 91) where observations (in this case, diary entries) take place at pre-determined intervals (e.g. each waking hour), or "occurrence recordings" (2008, p. 92) where entries are produced based on the frequency of certain thoughts or feelings. Alternatively, Chang (2008) states that self-observation can be recorded in a narrative format. She notes that flexibility in length and format is "less likely to inhibit recording" (p. 93). However, she does not give any guidance on the frequency of free-flowing entries.

Without consciously attempting to do so, I found myself somewhere in the middle ground. I created a document in which to collect my data, but I wrote my diary entries when I felt like it. I had originally decided to diarise at the end of each day (**Appendix 4**) but as soon as I started writing my diary I moved organically away from this plan. In fact, I was intrigued to see how much I would write and when. The key strength to this approach is that I can now say that I wrote in my diary because I felt compelled to by instinct, not timetable. **Figure 4.4** shows the dates on which I produced diary entries.

Figure 4.4 *Dates I wrote in my diary*



For the most part, I wrote almost immediately after the event. This was a direct consequence of the limitations of the ethical approval for this study. I could not access the university server on my mobile phone so it was impossible to write my diary during my commute. I could access the diary remotely through Citrix on my home laptop, but the technology was often unreliable and I feared I would lose tranches of diary entries. Having to write during the working day when I was at my work PC was a useful way of ensuring I wrote contemporaneously. This is not to say, however, that I always wrote contemporary notes, nor that I remained confident about my choice as to ‘organic’ entries. On 18 December 2015, I wrote:

“I’m a little disturbed by the long time periods between diary entries. I’ve had so many moments since 4 December where I kept thinking ‘I must write this down, I must write this down’. But then I don’t. I’m distracted. I prioritise other things. Last night, I had loads to say after finishing the DLaw taught sessions but I just didn’t sit down and write. Because I was busy writing the PhD

Proposal and I somehow prioritised that. Even though this is part of the PhD. Is it okay to write after the event? Is one day okay? Is it okay to think back further?"

Although I was only one day 'late', I worried that my recollection of events would not be anywhere near as vivid as it might have been on *17 December 2015*. Could I relive what happened in a meaningful way? In reality, the question of representation plagues diary writers generally. Even if we write about an event a few moments after it has occurred, can we truly represent our thoughts and emotions as they were? I am comforted by Freeman's (2015) acknowledgment that "writing about experience will always change *that* lived moment into *this* written one, and no amount of writerly control can eradicate that" (*original emphasis*, p. 86), and Bochner's (2000) assertion that the purpose of autoethnography is to "extract meaning from experience rather than to depict the experience exactly as it was lived" (p. 270). Whilst I do not think it is vital to use recorded data in autoethnography, diary entries - whenever they are written - can go some way to capturing "a richer, more complex, and puzzling landscape" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 54) than memory alone.

4.4.5 *My diary: what to write?*

Finding guidance on autoethnographic diary writing is tricky. I wrongly presumed that the majority of autoethnographers would use some form of reflective diary or journal as data. In reality, much more emphasis is placed on writing a narrative or creating vignettes from memory. Diaries are often mentioned as a mode of inquiry, but with little detail save for repeated references to Vickers (2002, 2007), Jenks (2002), Laurendeau (2011), and Tomaselli (2001) as exemplars. Disappointingly though, these interesting autoethnographic works are rarely explored further. They merit closer examination, not least because of the significant differences in the way each author negotiates the purpose and nature of their diary.

Vickers (2007) does not even refer to a diary. Instead she offers a "series of contemporaneous file notes" (p. 227) written during the time she was bullied in the workplace. Unlike my approach, Vickers did not set out to keep records. She only started when she discovered that her persecutor was keeping a file on her. Jenks (2002) also declines to call her diary 'a diary'. Her words are "field notes" (2002, p. 176), made during her son's attendance at a summer camp for blind and visually impaired children. Vickers (2002, 2007) and Jenks (2002) are usually grouped

together as exemplars of autoethnographic diarists. Ironically though, the complete lack of reference to a 'diary' is the only similarity they share.

Like my diary, Vicker's (2002, 2007) file notes are full of emotion. Written in secret, her words bring to life the fear and trauma she experienced as a result of exclusionary tactics, nastiness, accusations of paranoia, and physical assault. Jenks' (2002) field notes, on the other hand, are recordings of what she saw and heard, not what she felt. Jenks is at pains to tell us that emotion had no place in her field notes. She made a conscious choice to "omit emotions" (2002, p. 176).

Laurendeau's (2011) article has a fantastically engaging title: *"If you're reading this, it's because I've died"*. In it, he highlights the relationship between risk and responsibility as he takes up and later walks away from BASE jumping. The article is referenced in Anderson & Glass-Coffin's (2013) chapter on autoethnographic modes of enquiry, where they state that Laurendeau "draws upon field notes written up following specific base-jumping activities and events" (p. 66). However, I am not sure whether contemporaneous field notes were taken at all. Laurendeau does not refer to any. The only allusion to 'method' comes in the first of a series of notes at the end of the article. Laurendeau (2011) explains that readers can think the comments and asides that appear in the articles "as memos written to myself at various stages of the research...Some...are based on conversations I've had with myself, whereas others are loosely based on real conversations with family, friends and colleagues throughout this project" (p. 417). If Laurendeau did use field notes to construct his narrative on BASE jumping, he does not explicitly say so.

In stark contrast, Tomaselli (2001) definitively states that his article "speaks as a diary from the field" (p. 284). Written as he and four students were "holed up in a dusty crossroads, Jwaneng, in Botswana" (2001, p. 285), Tomaselli discusses problems in fieldwork, academic access, and research accountability. In particular, he criticises "celebrity scholars" (2001, p. 284) working hard in their air-conditioned First World offices, overtheorising their arguments, and charging high appearance fees to make jargon-laden arguments. Field researchers, like Tomaselli, are often confronted by facts "disparaged by theorists" (Tomaselli, 2001, p. 284). I read his article as an attempt to show the reality behind textbooks on Southern Africa: "Hunger is real, malnutrition is debilitating, and thirst is excruciating" (Tomaselli, 2001, p. 284). It works. When the article was submitted for publication in *Critical Studies -> Critical Methodologies*, editor

Norman Denzin wrote that he could “smell the dust” (Tomaselli, Dyll-Myklebust, & van Grootheest, 2016, p. 576).

Autoethnographic diaries are often grouped together as a homogeneous family. However, they are not identical. Jenks (2002) went into the camp ready to write her field notes. Vickers (2002, 2007) did not want to have to produce hers. Jenks (2002) set out to exclude emotion. Tomaselli (2001) wants us to feel we are travelling along sandy, bumpy Botswanan terrain alongside him.

How then to negotiate my own diary? I wrote my first diary entry on 7 October 2015, the day my teaching in the Student Law Office started. From the outset, I knew that my diary would capture my emotions. That, to me, was the entire point. My goal was to catch the behind the scenes moments rarely written about in clinical legal education literature. I am reticent to put forward any diary 'guidelines', but I do believe that a diary - for autoethnographic purposes - should comprise more than a detached account of dates, times, locations, and errands. This is why I find it difficult to reconcile Jenks' (2002) point of view. I consider emotionality to be at the core of autoethnographic research. I do not know how I could begin to understand the intense mental activity, complexities, and contradictions that come with law clinic supervision if I were to simply write calmly and clinically about the tasks that made up my working day. My diary was not written in secret and fear like Vickers' (2002), but it was a place where I could write down what I was thinking and how I was feeling at the time.

4.5 Choosing an analytical tool

4.5.1 In search of autoethnographic analysis

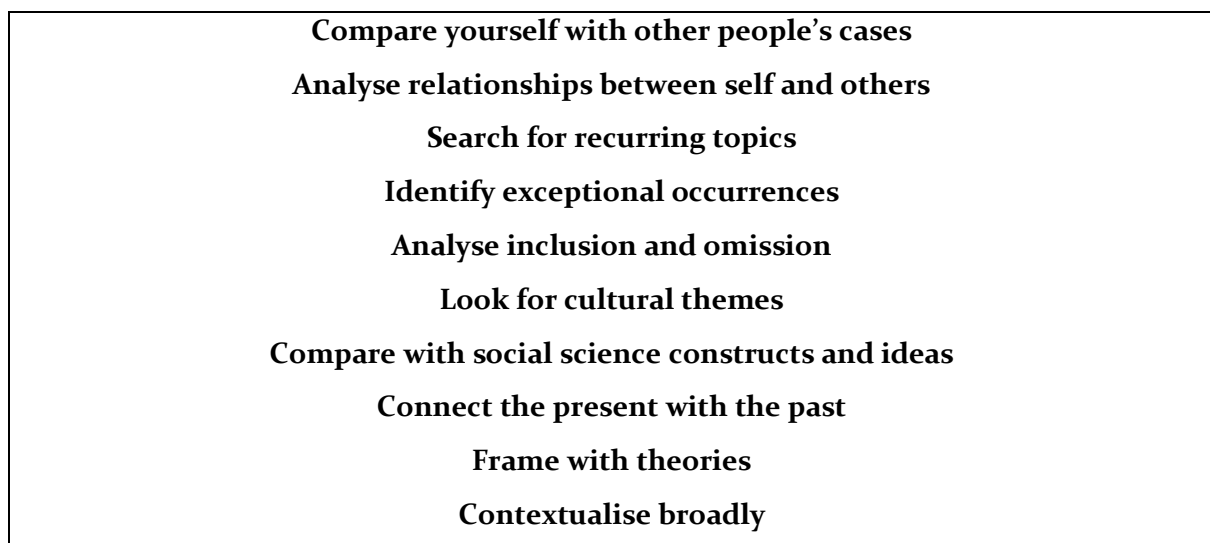
Having decided very early on to analyse the content of my reflective diary entries, I set about searching for helpful guides. Advice as to how to 'do' autoethnography can lack exactitude, but it is at least increasingly emerging. Unfortunately, finding comprehensive guidance on analysing autoethnographic data has been a more demanding task.

Most methodological books on autoethnography are aligned to the evocative tradition. In *Autoethnography* (Adams et al., 2015), there is a short section on interpreting meaning and analysing fieldwork, but the focus is clearly on making sense of fieldwork through story. *The Ethnographic I* (Ellis, 2004) and *Evocative Autoethnography* (Bochner & Ellis, 2016)

unsurprisingly continue in the same vein. Again, the authors' goal is to help would-be autoethnographers creative rich, complex, and evocative stories, not to analyse autoethnographic data.

Chang's (2008) textbook is conspicuous as a rare example of devoting an entire chapter to analysing autoethnographic data. Alongside pointers to start early and review data segmentally, Chang (2008) offers ten strategies for analysis and interpretation (**Figure 4.5**). The advice, whilst helpful, is fairly simplistic. I was also confused as to whether the strategies were separate pieces of advice or should be followed in their entirety. To be fair, Chang does explain that the list should be viewed as "helpful suggestions" rather than a "complete tool kit of data analysis" (2008, p. 131). Unfortunately, however, sometimes a complete tool kit is exactly what you are looking for.

Figure 4.5 *Chang's (2008) 10 strategies for autoethnographic analysis and interpretation*



Despite a lack of detailed guidance in autoethnographic textbooks, Anderson's (2006a) proposal continues to resonate with and influence autoethnographers across a range of disciplines. In 2018, analytic autoethnography was explicitly referenced in research on higher education (Kitchin & Wiley, 2018), disability (Lourens, 2018), Critical Race Parenting (Nishi, 2018), and medicine (Cipolletta, 2018). Even so, the depth of information provided about the methods employed in the process of analysis is mixed. Some authors simply reference Anderson (2006a, 2006b) and go no further (see, for example, Kitchin & Wiley, 2018; Lourens, 2018). Others go

into useful detail about the data generation process, but do not explain how the data was analysed (see, for example, Nishi, 2018).

Even within emerging contemporary practice, such as collaborative or co-constructed analytic autoethnography, guidance as to analytic techniques are in short supply. Richards & Haberlin's (2017) collaborative analytic autoethnographic inquiry between a professor and her doctoral student draws heavily on Anderson's (2006a) research. Most of the article is made up of email communications between the co-authors. Their discussions about the nature of Anderson's principles is engaging. However, evocative autoethnographic research is often presented as a dialogue, and I struggle to see how Richards & Haberlin's (2017) analytic research differs from evocative papers I have read. Similarly, the authors of the first co-constructed analytic autoethnography in sports management argue that an analytical approach encouraged them to "develop a narrative that was more than just a chronology of events and a list of characters" (Cox et al., 2017, p. 531). First, this presupposes that autoethnography at the evocative end of the spectrum is merely a catalogue of episodes. It is not. Secondly, no explanation of the analytic process is provided. Without knowing, even briefly, the process scholars go through when they make a claim for analytic autoethnography, it is difficult to see where or how the analysis takes place.

I do not often find myself in agreement with critics of autoethnography. However, Atkinson & Delamont (2005) make a valid point when they conclude that analysts should not "represent the social world exclusively through the lens of one analytic strategy" (p. 836). There are many ways of analysing autoethnography. I do not want a one-size-fits-all format. However, when research is explicitly positioned as taking an analytical approach, the researcher should be prepared to explain how that analysis manifests itself. Only then will autoethnographers be able to draw from tried and tested examples of analytic procedure and find the right process for their study.

4.5.2 *Thematic analysis*

With my own diary, I had two goals. First, in line with an autoethnographic ethos, I wanted to immerse myself in the data. Secondly, I wanted to analyse the content of my diary in depth and identify the patterns within the data. Thematic analysis, as proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006), aligned strongly with my objectives.

Thematic analysis identifies, analyses, and reports themes within data sets (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Whilst widely used, it is a poorly demarcated and branded method undertaken with varying degrees effectiveness (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Some of the worst examples of thematic analysis do not include any analysis at all (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In order to combat confusion and address quality issues, Braun & Clarke (2006) provided a step-by-step guide to conducting thematic analysis. The process is divided into six phases, as set out in **Figure 4.6**. Despite each phase being a separate part of the process, Braun & Clarke (2006) note that analysis involves a “constant moving back and forth between the data set, the coded extracts of data you are analysing, and the analysis of the data that you are producing” (p. 86). Therefore, thematic analysis, as they approach it, is a flexible method. The phases are “not rules” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86), but rather guidelines. The process is not linear, but rather “recursive” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86).

Figure 4.6 *Braun & Clarke’s (2006) phases of thematic analysis*



Unsurprisingly, given this straightforward, clear, and accessible approach, thematic analysis has proved very popular especially in the last decade (Clarke & Braun, 2018). Popularity has however been accompanied by continuing confusion about what thematic analysis is, its philosophical underpinnings, and best practice (Clarke & Braun, 2018).

Braun and Clarke have made repeated efforts to dispel erroneous uses and representations of their work. They "took for granted" (Clarke, 2018), for example, that readers of their 2006 paper would share their understanding of a theme. They have since made it clear that themes are not "diamonds scattered in the sand, waiting to plucked-up by a lucky passer-by" (Braun & Clarke, 2016, p. 740). Instead, much like baking a cake, you must combine "materials (ingredients), processes and skills" (Braun & Clarke, 2016, p. 740). The cake is not "waiting to be 'revealed'" (Braun & Clarke, 2016, p. 740). Rather, the cake exists because of the baker's "activity and engagement, within set parameters" (Braun & Clarke, 2016, p. 740). Despite repeated criticism of the idea of the emergence of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2016; Clarke & Braun, 2018), Braun and Clarke's work continues to be (mis)cited as validating this approach.

I am drawn to Braun & Clarke's approach to thematic analysis because of the similarities with autoethnography. Thematic analysis is said to provide a "rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 78). Equally, autoethnography is described as a research tool that enhances "the representational richness and reflexivity of qualitative research" (Humphreys, 2005, p. 840). Thematic analysis is also underpinned by a "distinctly qualitative research philosophy" (Clarke & Braun, 2018, p. 107) emphasising researcher subjectivity "as a resource" (Clarke & Braun, 2018, p. 107). Autoethnography, as I have explained in this chapter, embraces subjectivity. Finally, Clarke & Braun (2018) view themes as "key characters in the story we are telling about the data" (p. 108). The parallels with autoethnography are clear.

Despite its complimentary nature, thematic analysis is rarely mentioned in conjunction with autoethnography. Where it is referenced, it is often done so fleetingly (see, for example, Pearce & Lohman, 2018). Given the lack of detailed guidance as to how to analyse autoethnographic data, this is hardly surprising. I did find two examples of thematic analysis of autoethnographic data that contained some detail, however. Maydell's (2010) study looks specifically at methodological struggles and analytical process. She chooses thematic analysis in order to structure "very rich but seemingly unmanageable" (2010, p.7) autoethnographic data that is often "a stream of consciousness" (2010, p. 7). However, Maydell provides very limited information as to the steps she took to create her themes. She mentions Clarke & Braun (2006), but does not identify their six phases of thematic analysis. I am unsure whether she utilised the six phases as Clarke & Braun (2006) set them out or if she found her own way through the process.

4.5.3 Why not use grounded theory?

Analytic autoethnographers sometimes reference grounded theory. Pace (2012), in particular, makes an emphatic case for autoethnographers to “employ analytic strategies from the grounded theory tradition in their work” (p. 1). Drawing on Glaser & Strauss (1967), Pace provides a step by step guide to the four stages of data analysis when using grounded theory (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 Four stages of data analysis in the grounded theory tradition (Pace, 2012)

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Analysis</i>	<i>Description</i>
Stage 1	Open coding	Breaking the data down into significant concepts
Stage 2	Theoretical coding	Reassembling the significant concepts with propositions about their relationships to each other
Stage 3	Selective coding	Delimiting the analysis to only those concepts and relationships that are related to the core explanatory concept
Stage 4	Outlining and writing up	Sorting the theoretical memos into an outline and writing up the theory

Duncan (2004) also drew on grounded theory data analysis in order to inform her “overarching process of categorization and theming” (2004, p. 6) of notebooks containing “reflections-in action” (2004, p. 6). She wanted to understand how to improve her design process, so for one year she handwrote two A4 pages in her notebooks twice a week, and collected emails, memos, and sketches. On the surface, Duncan's (2004) autoethnographic data generation looks like mine. Duncan was more rigid in her approach, and she collected a wider range of material, but she too was left with a large amount of self-generated, reflective text to analyse. I considered for some time whether I should follow her and use grounded theory. I was particularly affected by the argument that grounded theory analysis would stimulate “deeper and more detailed reflections” (Duncan, 2004, p. 7). This is, of course, the key objective for many autoethnographers. Like thematic analysis, grounded theory also seeks patterns in data.

Why did I reject grounded theory? As a qualitative methodology, grounded theory is like "a ready-made bear" (Clarke & Braun, 2018, p. 109) where "ideal research questions, methods of data collection and sampling procedures are defined or delimited" (Clarke & Braun, 2018, p. 109). The main goal of grounded theory analysis is to "generate a plausible and useful theory of the phenomena that is grounded in the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 80). Thematic analysis, whilst not atheoretical, is more akin to a "make your own bear" (Clarke & Braun, 2018, p. 109), where the researcher gets to choose the type of fur, shape and colour of the eyes, and amount of stuffing. The 'make your own bear' is made up of the same elements as its ready-made counterpart, but it is ultimately a product of the individual's choices. In this study, I am not looking to analyse my data in order to "generalise theoretical propositions" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 219). I also want to engage in a "*conscious* and reflexive application of approaches and procedures" (*original emphasis*, Clarke & Braun, 2018, p. 109) and make choices as to how I implement the analytical tool I use. Thematic analysis is clearly the most appropriate choice.

4.6 Thematic analysis of my reflective diary entries

4.6.1 A transparent, step by step guide

Given the relatively light treatment of analytic techniques in autoethnographic literature, here I offer a comprehensive and systematic explanation of the way I used thematic analysis to make sense of my own data. I go through each of Braun & Clarke's (2006) six phases of analysis. I supply thematic maps showing how I moved back and forth through the data set and identified relevant themes.

However, alongside this, and perhaps more importantly, I also provide what could be characterised as a micro-autoethnographic account (Collins, 2015) of my experience analysing my diary entries based on notes I made at the time. Despite its fairly methodical nature, the process of thematic analysis is not a clinical one. I encountered a surprising range of emotions as I read and re-read my diaries. I made decisions about coding, and then changed my mind. I questioned and re-assessed themes I identified. I was often plagued with doubt.

With transparency comes risk. Who wants to acknowledge doubts about their own analysis, and mistakes made during the process? I have decided to be as candid as possible about my experience of thematic analysis, despite the dangers, because I want to make two positive

contributions to the literature on autoethnography. First, I want to move the discourse on autoethnography beyond vague or limited references to analysis. Secondly, my intention is to provide point-by-point insight into the use of thematic analysis as a tool in autoethnography. There is a significant gap in the literature, and, in this section, I attempt to expand on current understanding of autoethnographic research and offer practical suggestions for analytical practices.

4.6.2 Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data

Immerse yourself in the data “to the extent that you are familiar with the depth and breadth of the content”. This is “vital”. Read the entire data set “at least once”. Even at this early stage, take notes or ideas for coding.

(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

30 May 2017

“At home in the back bedroom. Sitting at the white IKEA desk, door ajar. Laptop open in front of me. I can make notes that way. Ready to read it properly for the first time.. Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band (Remastered) is on.”

“Three hours immersed in the data. You can see my health declining in the data. I’m starting to use “anxiety” over and over again. You can also see how happy I am when I see my students succeed. I am so conflicted between research and clinic as time goes on.”

I remember reading through the diary entries for the first time very well. I had printed off the Microsoft Word document containing the diary entries whilst at work and carried it carefully home with me, where it had rested on our new IKEA desk overnight. I had an acute sense of anticipation as I approached the crisp, newly printed document, neatly placed in front of me.

When I came to look at my notes from Phase 1 I was surprised. Why did I make so few? And why did they look so disjointed? On reflection, my lack of notes demonstrates how truly immersed in the data I was. Only once three hours had passed did I think to write something down.

I made three seemingly distinct observations in my notes; my increasing anxiety, my happiness at my students' success, and the conflict between time for research and time for supervision. Again, on reflection, each observation speaks to the emotional impact of my role as a supervisor.

4.6.3 Phase 2: Generating initial codes

Only do this once - read data and make initial notes. Codes "identify a feature of the data (semantic content or latent) that appears interesting to the analyst". This is about organisation of data. We are not looking at themes yet.
(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88)

31 May 2017

"9.47am. Back bedroom. Cinema chillout playlist on. Reading the print out again.

Have naturally moved onto Phase 2. Read the data but then instinctively made initial notes and started coding features of interest. Naturally began moving features into groups and start organising. Resisting jumping to the end. I'm re-reading when I find features that I think are common e.g. being pulled in two directions - thought had seen that feature before - went back to look - "torn in so many different directions" "I'm stuck between two worlds" "I feel torn apart" "It's a complete shift".

"Been at it for over 2 hours. Leaving it now for a rest. It's actually emotionally exhausting to see how anxious and worried I am in this text. [redacted]. That it's raw, there on the page. And having to go over and over it is like wading through treacle because I want to look but I don't want to feel. It is my story. Fascinating how I said I wanted to stop journaling because it made the experience alive and I was living in my head so much. I never really thought what it would be like to re-live being in my head."

Appendix 2 shows my diary entries with my initial codes from 31st May 2017. I highlighted sections of the text and used the comments tool to code the text. For example, I highlighted a section of text from 4 November 2015 ('what to do when someone is working on a completely different timescale to your own?') and coded it as 'logistics – time management'.

Reading my notes again now, I am struck by the emotional impact reading through the diary and coding had on me. I was clearly keen to identify the patterns in the data, but the process itself was draining as I re-lived the experiences embedded on the page.

4.6.4 Phases 2 and 3: Generating initial codes and searching for themes

Only do this once - read data and make initial notes. Codes “identify a feature of the data (semantic content or latent) that appears interesting to the analyst”. This is about organisation of data. We are not looking at themes yet.

(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88)

Refocus from codes to themes, ending phase with “a collection of candidate themes, and sub-themes, and all extracts of data that have been coded in relation to them”. Visual representation advised.

(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 90)

1 June 2017

“Lord this is draining, And I’m worried I’m coding nearly everything. What to leave out and what to leave in? Everything seems so relevant. I think I’ve got my themes now but they need moving around. For example, clinic first needs to have three subthemes including the conflict with research. I don’t think that goes under ‘many hats’ any more. I think ‘many hats’ has more subthemes to do with my identity as teacher, lawyer etc. Researcher could fit in there but I think it is better served under a separate section. I’m not saying that I’m a lawyer, researcher. I’m saying I’m a lawyer educator. The research side is split off into a section on conflict between clinic and non clinic. Stopping for today. Have done 2 hours on this section.”

Things changed quickly in these early stages. I kept coding as I had done the day before, and as I did so I started to see patterns in the data. Inevitably, after reading the entries over and over, I noticed similarities in the content and ideas that appeared to be repeated.

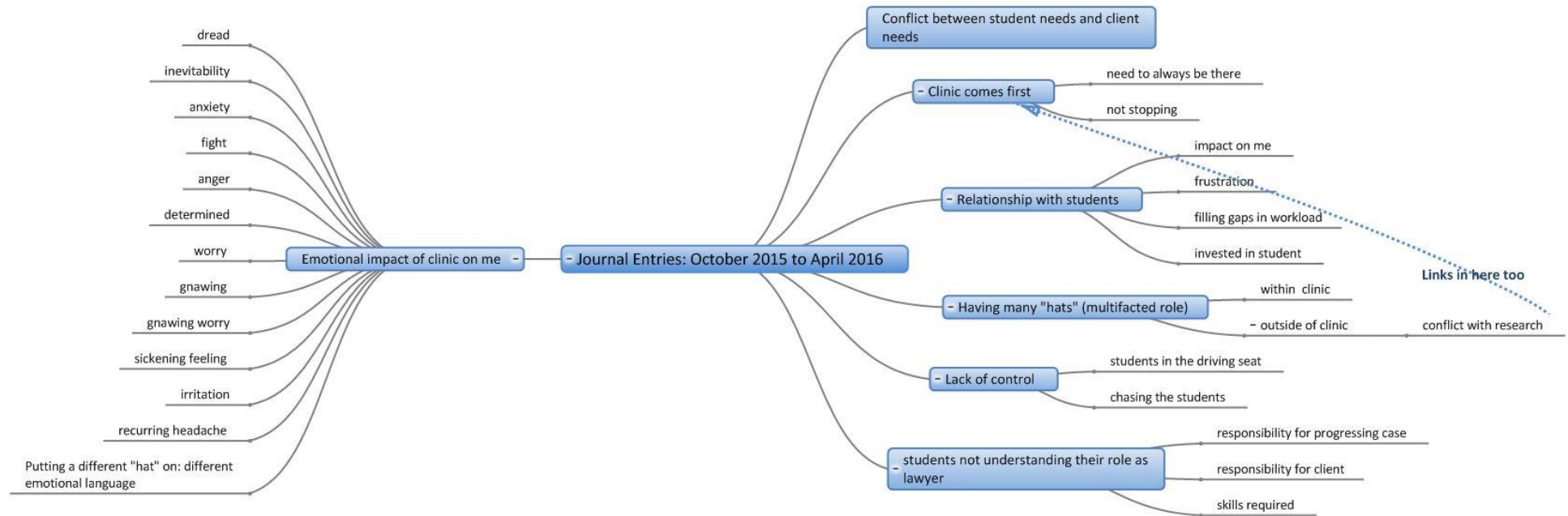
At first, I tried to keep everything within the Word format. I was heavily influenced by Gina Grandy, who had facilitated a workshop on analysing and presenting analysis of qualitative data I had attended on 8 December 2016. Grandy (and her co-authors) used tables to organise raw

data into themes (Grandy & Mavin, 2012; Grandy & Levit, 2015; Grandy & Sliwa, 2017). I tried to create a Word document listing the themes in the left-hand column and codes that matched the theme on the right. It did not work. The document was clunky to create – feeling more like a cut and paste exercise rather than any meaningful engagement with the data – and I was left with another long document. I did not feel I was doing anything useful with the data.

Instead, I decided to test the use of Mind Genius Mind Mapping Software to visually represent my candidate themes and sub-themes. Mind Genius is available free of charge through my university, and I use it regularly to mind map my workload and tasks for the year ahead. I was confident that I understood the basic principles well enough to see if a mind map created through Mind Genius would allow me to visualise themes identified and to review them.

Figure 4.8 shows Mind Map 1, created on 1 June 2017. I very quickly felt that the mind map approach worked much better. I was also confident that it suited the immersive, creative style autoethnographic practice lends itself to.

Figure 4.8 Mind Map 1, created 1 June 2017



4.6.5 Phase 4: Reviewing themes

Reviewing and refining themes. May need some re-coding
(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 91)

12 June 2017

“Dived back in after a week’s annual leave. Looked at Mind Map 1 and knew instinctively I was not happy with it. Initial themes weaved together. Sub-themes were contradictory. I knew this when I left it before I went on annual leave. I wanted to let it percolate, so I could come back with fresh eyes. This is what I did today. I needed to look back at my data and step into Phase 4”

Mind Map 1 (Figure 4.7) was not the finished article. But, then again, it was never meant to be. Braun & Clarke (2006) specifically encourage going back and revising initial themes and sub-themes. Indeed, they dedicate an entire phase to this task.

I moved quite naturally to revision and refinement, keen to remove inconsistencies and contradictions I saw quite clearly from the visual representation of my data through Mind Map 1 (Figure 4.8). Mind Map 2 (Figure 4.9) shows the themes and sub-themes I created on 12 June 2017.

Once I was able to see themes and sub-themes represented visually, I was unhappy with the theme ‘having many hats’. I had originally coded statements such as *‘I’m stuck between two worlds. I’m a lawyer. I’m a good lawyer. And I can tell the client what they need to know within minutes. But I also have to protect the students. They don’t know the answers. They need time to find the answers and then relay them. This can take weeks’* as ‘many hats: lawyer and teacher’. Even in the Word table I eventually abandoned I identified the different ‘hats’ I wore. I had not done this in Mind Map 1 (Figure 4.8). There was also an evident link between the sub-themes I had created for ‘having many hats’ and the theme ‘clinic comes first’. I had even put a dotted line between the two themes in Mind Map 1 (Figure 4.8)

In Mind Map 2 (Figure 4.9), I created a new theme to replace ‘having many hats’. The new theme was called ‘relationship with students’. It contained four sub-themes, representing the data that spoke to my relationship with clinic students as (a) a teacher (b) a colleague (c) a

lawyer and (d) all three at the same time. I refined the descriptions of the sub-themes for 'clinic comes first' to account for the cross-over I had identified earlier.

13 June 2017

The next day, I continued refining and revising themes and sub-themes. **Figure 4.10** shows Mind Map 3, which I created following additional changes.

Figure 4.9 Mind Map 2, created on 12 June 2017

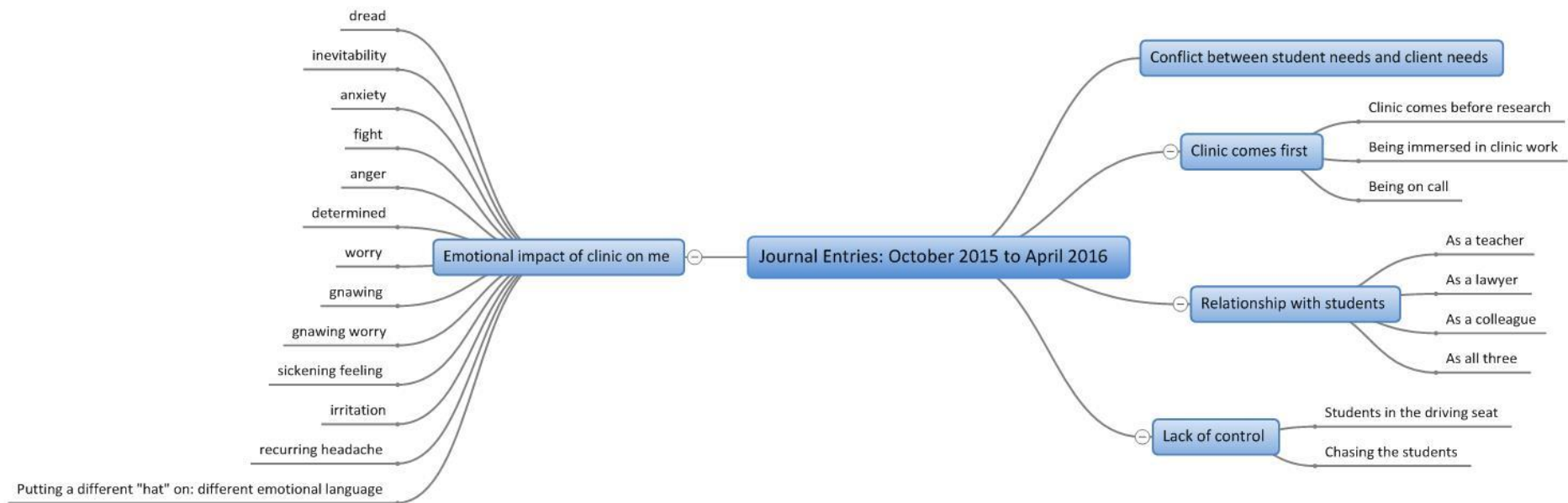
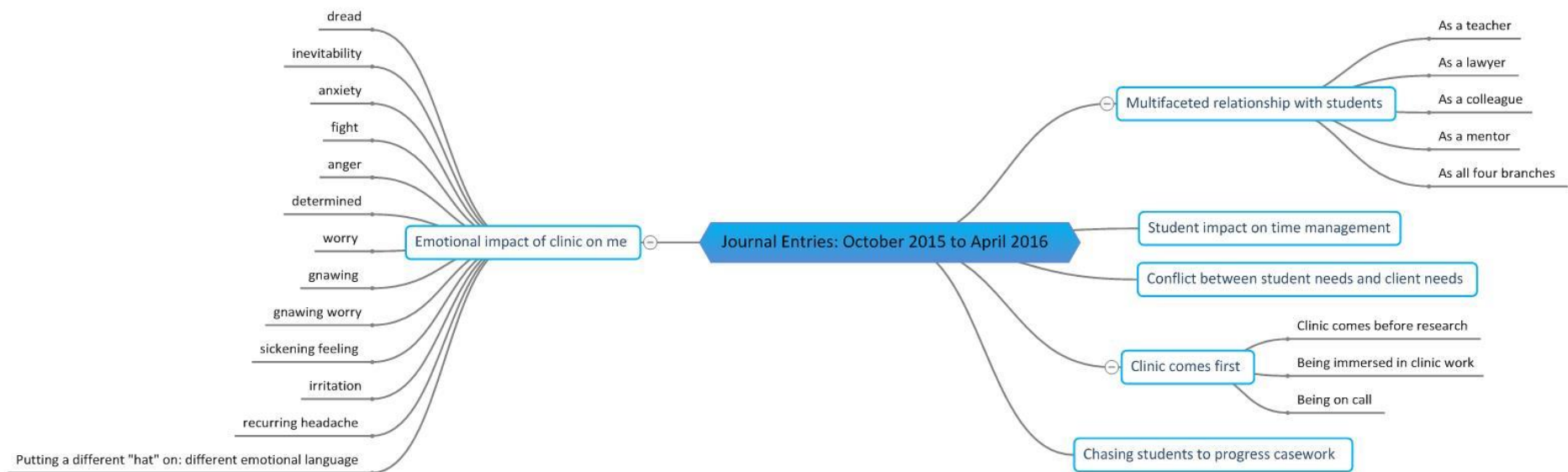


Figure 4.10 Mind Map 3, created on 13 June 2017



Key changes in Mind Map 3 (**Figure 4.10**):

1. I looked at Mind Map 2 (**Figure 4.9**) and knew that the code ‘investment in students’ was missing, and not captured by the sub-themes in the theme ‘multifaceted relationship with students’. I looked back at my data and saw that the investment codes were often inside the sub-themes ‘being a teacher/lawyer/colleague’. However, the ‘being a teacher/lawyer/colleague’ sub-themes did not get to the heart of what I was saying about being emotionally invested and wanting the students to succeed. For example, this extract from a diary entry on 11 November 2015 did not fit comfortably in any of the ‘being a teacher/lawyer/colleague’ sub-themes:

“These are my students. My bunch of 12. My firms. I want them to do well. I want them to succeed. They drive me mad, but I can see the person behind the student and they’re not bad people. They’re just learning. And I know that at the end of the year I want them to look back at this as the best experience they’ve had. I do it for them.”

At one point, I thought about labelling this as a ‘parental’ relationship but felt this went too far. The data was not saying I was being maternal. It was speaking of growth (and investment in growth) that went beyond purely educational (e.g. the pedagogic nature of the live/mock casework) purposes. In the end I created the subtheme ‘being a mentor’. Whilst I did not use the word mentor in my diary, I felt this captured the space between an educational and parental role.

2. I also re-evaluated the ‘Lack of Control’ theme. In Mind Map 1 (**Figure 4.8**) and Mind Map 2 (**Figure 4.9**), ‘Lack of Control’ was divided into two sub-themes (‘Students in the driving seat’ and ‘Chasing the students’). This, in hindsight, was wrong. Students were in the driving seat, but that did not mean I lacked control of the case. I was consistently behind the scenes strategizing. However, I was repeatedly chasing the students to progress the case. At one point in the diary I wondered whether clients would ever get advice if I were not pushing and nudging and chasing. So, rather than there being two sub-themes, Lack of Control was really ‘being at the mercy of students’ time management’ or ‘dancing to students’ tune but then having to constantly think ahead’. ‘Lack of Control’ did not work as a theme. I created ‘Chasing students to progress casework’ to replace it.

4.6.6 Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

"It is important not to try and get a theme to do too much, or to be too diverse and complex". Go back "to collated data extracts for each theme, and [organise] them into a coherent and internally consistent account, with accompanying narrative".
(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92)

In reality, I was defining and naming themes throughout the time I was revising and refining themes. What is the data telling me? Am I missing something? Am I overthinking the theme? Could I split the theme into sub-themes? Are the sub-themes really separate or do they really interlink with each other?

14 June 2016

"When switching off my computer last night I realised that I had a theme called "Not switching off/emotional impact of clinical work" that I hadn't properly accounted for in my mind map. This morning I looked at that theme again. I determined that my list of descriptive emotional words were immediate emotional reactions, whereas the narrative data I had collected under not switching off represented the long term or residual emotional impact. I changed the theme in the word document and altered the mind map to create Mind Map 4."

Figure 4.11 shows Mind Map 4.

15 June 2016

"When explaining my themes and subthemes to a colleague, realised 'being immersed in clinic work' did not correctly encapsulate what I wanted to say. I changed the sub-theme to the words I used to describe it to her - namely, that there was a constant stream of case work coming in either in inbox or in paper documents. This was a better way of saying what I wanted to say. I changed the mind map accordingly."

Figure 4.12 shows Mind Map 5.

Later that day, I realised that the 'immediate emotional state' subtheme (from the 'Emotional impact of clinic on me' theme) did not require the list of emotional states attached to it. The list was also not complete. I adjusted the map for a final time, to create Mind Map 6 (**Figure 4.13**). Mind Map 6 (**Figure 4.13**) shows the final themes and sub-themes identified from my diary.

I also went back to the diary extracts for each theme, and created a final document linking each extract with the re-named theme/subtheme. Sometimes, taking one or two lines from a larger piece of text led to a loss of context and so I often included a fuller extract and italicised sections I had originally coded. I have included an excerpt below, for illustration (**Figure 4.14**). The complete document can be found at **Appendix 3**.

Figure 4.11 Mind Map 4, created on 14 June 2017

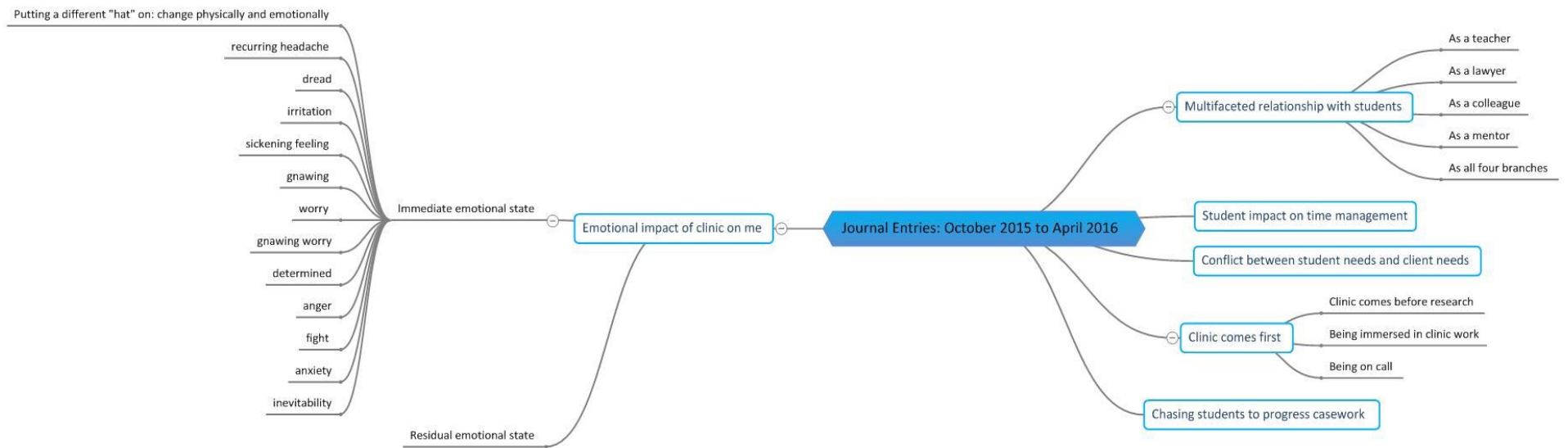


Figure 4.12 Mind Map 5, created on 15 June 2017

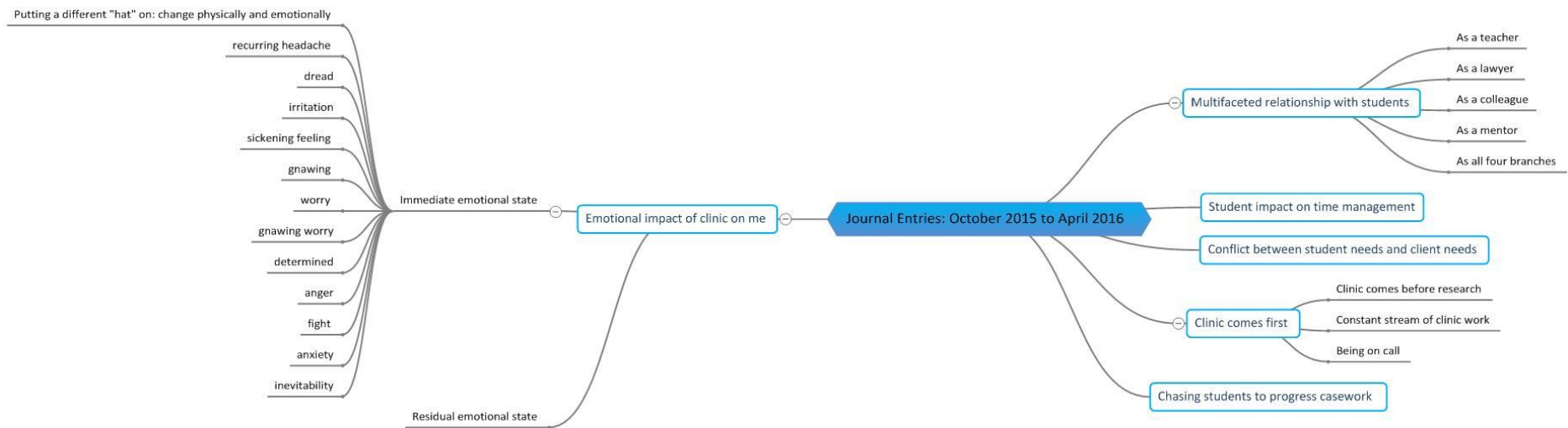


Figure 4.13 Mind Map 6, created on 15 June 2017

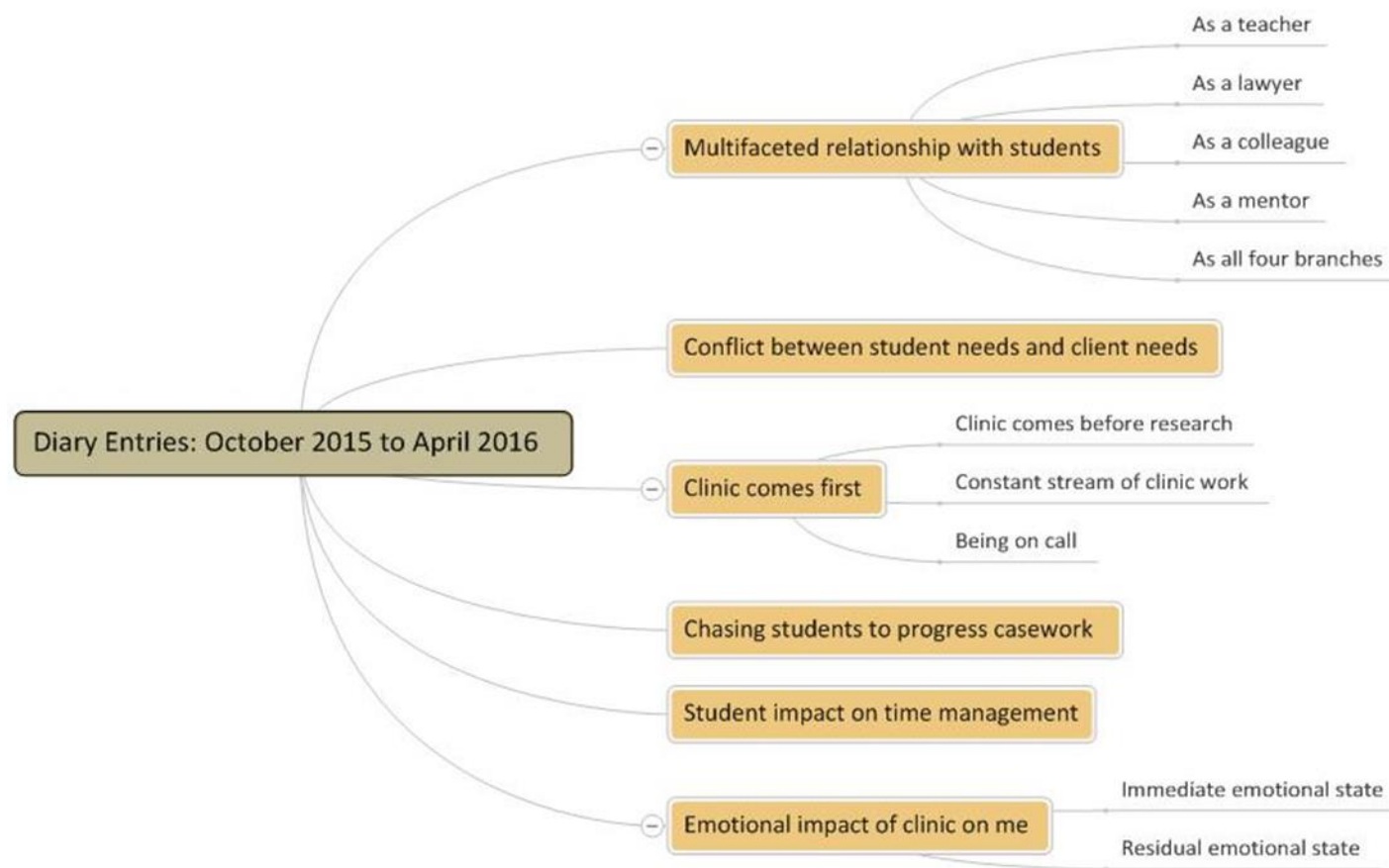


Figure 4.14 *An excerpt of the final document showing diary extracts forming the basis of themes/sub-themes*

Student impact on my time management	<p>Today, I was offered the opportunity to go to another conference. But I've turned it down. I don't want to spend time away from home (M's due to go to U for two weeks soon and we've got a big trip coming up that weekend) but that's not my main concern. <i>My main concern – and I hate myself for this – is that I feel I should be in the office dealing with client work. If I go, that'll be two weeks away. I feel I need to be here because my students are so slow and I need to be able to turn things round when they arrive, eventually. They have all the time in the world, and I just have whatever is left. We have a window and I get the scraps if they can't manage their time properly.</i> [11 March 2016]</p> <p>Am I angry? Well, I guess I am. Maybe I'm more frustrated. Why is this work full of errors? Why am I sitting here rewriting an interview plan when I'm on research leave? It's not as if they've not looked at this topic before – it's exactly the same as the last case! <i>So I'm annoyed that I'm having to correct it. I'm annoyed that I have to re-write the same stuff over and over again. Why not send it back? Well because it's Friday, the interview is on Wednesday and I'm not back in the office until Tuesday. They know that. What they don't know is that my Tuesday is busy and I don't want to spend time faffing on with an interview plan at speed just to get it back to them ready for Wednesday. So I faff on with it now and send it back. But they'll probably not pick it up until Tuesday so why am I bothering?</i> And then I get hit with guilt – what if giving them a similar case was bad for that student? What if they would have thrived on a different case that involved different principles? But then, hang, this is fourth year of a Masters level course. You've already done it, why is it wrong? And then I start thinking about assessment – is this 2:2 standard now? So I feel bad, because they will feel bad. And I would hate to get something bad where there were so many errors pointed out. But then if I had done that standard of work isn't that what I'd be expecting? Do they really give a stuff? [26 February 2016]</p>
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4.6.7 Phase 6: Producing the report

Once the themes are fully worked out, you provide a final analysis and write up a report.

"...tell the complicated story of your data in a way that convinces the reader of the merit and validity of your analysis".

(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93)

In this thesis, **Chapter 6** constitutes the report. However, I would argue that this section also tells the complicated story of my data. Rather than jumping straight to a list of themes, I have worked through each element of my analysis detailing the metamorphosis of codes, themes, and sub-themes. I have also told the story of the (re)construction of the presentation of my analysis.

My objective was to provide a transparent, step by step account of my route through thematic analysis, culminating in a greater understanding of the analytical process. I believe I have achieved that goal. However, through my micro-autoethnographic account (Collins, 2015), I have also come to appreciate that analytic methods are not simply clinical techniques to be replicated impassively. Working with content based on your own lived reality can mean re-living and reflecting on choices made and feelings felt. My experience suggests this can be an emotionally exhausting task. Autoethnographic researchers should not be afraid to step away

from their data (whether this be diary entries, or other data such as field notes or physical materials) when required.

4.7 Concluding comments

In this chapter I have made a concerted effort to provide a step by step guide to my research design, data generation, and data analysis. Driven by the lack of transparency in analytic autoethnography literature, I have explained in considerable detail how I used a reflective diary to capture my data and thematic analysis to analyse its content. Mindful that others may wish to use (or indeed critique) my methods, I have endeavoured to make this chapter as accessible as possible by using micro-autoethnographic accounts (Collins, 2015) and large visuals to represent my processes.

I have also taken the opportunity in this chapter to address criticism of autoethnography and to defend my stance on validity and generalisability. I will return to these issues again in **Chapter 6**.

Chapter 5 AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC ETHICS

5.1 Introduction

Why have a separate chapter on autoethnographic ethics? Why not deal with ethical concerns in the methods chapter, as other doctoral students writing autoethnographically (Wijayatilake, 2012; Chapeskie, 2015; Collins, 2015; Skousen, 2015; Lawson, 2017) have done?

Autoethnography is incredibly personal, and therefore immensely risky (Sikes, 2006). Writing about childhood sexual abuse perpetrated by family members (Rambo Ronai, 1997) or a drunken suicide attempt (Jago, 2002), may allow for deep exploration of complex emotions and actions. Yet autoethnographic research also exposes publicly and forevermore an account that may come to haunt the author and have lasting repercussions for identifiable others. Autoethnography is, as Sparkes (2018) quite rightly says, "saturated" (p. 485) with ethical difficulties.

Some parts of this study have come quite easily. Once I decided upon thematic analysis, for example, I followed that path with little reticence. The spectre of writing about myself and others who are part of my life, has, on the other hand, been ever present, and remains to this day. I have often been disturbed, mid-typing, by Delamont's (2007) declaration that autoethnography is "almost impossible to write and publish ethically" (p. 2). I have been apprehensive about how "dodgy" (Sikes, 2006, p. 106) autoethnography might be in terms of my career. Finally, I have queried whether the deeply introspective nature of autoethnographic practice has had a negative impact on my mental health. For all these reasons, the ethical dilemmas I have encountered and the choices I have made deserve to be addressed explicitly and fully in a distinct chapter.

This chapter is divided into four parts. First, I start with a discussion about the ethics of writing about intimate others, more commonly known as relational ethics (Ellis, 2007). I explore potential avenues available to autoethnographers seeking to be ethical in their research, including gaining consent (Tolich, 2010; Tullis, 2016), anonymisation (Couser, 2004; Ellis, 2007) fictionalisation (Sparkes, 2007; Schwartz, 2013), and mindful slippage (Medford, 2006; Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009). I also justify my position on relational ethics and the choices I have made in this study. The second part of this chapter examines the myriad of approaches taken by institutional ethical review boards faced with autoethnographic research. I reflect on my own

experience of attempting to gain ethical consent for this study and make the case for using, rather than battling, ethical frameworks and those who implement them. Next, I make the case for self-care during and after autoethnographic work. I pay particular attention to the challenge of writing reflexively in and about the academy. Finally, on a more positive note, I conclude with a short examination of the ethical value of autoethnography.

5.2 Autoethnography and relational ethics

5.2.1 *The duty to protect others from harm*

Typically, researchers obtain data from others and take steps to ensure participants do not suffer harm because of their engagement in the research (Bryman, 2016). Autoethnography, on the other hand, uses the researcher as subject. Autoethnographers do not have to seek out (though some do - see Adams et al., 2015, for example) third-party participants. The data comes from the researcher's own lived experience.

Superficially, autoethnography appears to avoid the need to consider potential harm to third parties. Indeed, Sparkes' (2018) students told him their autoethnographic research was just about them so no ethical issues existed. Of course, this position is "no longer possible or permissible" (Sparkes, 2018, p. 485). As John Donne (1624) elegantly noted, no man is an island. Interactions with others can have a profound effect on the way we live, our emotions, and the choices we make. Autoethnographers do not avoid a duty to protect others from harm. On the contrary, the "authorial power" (Tullis, 2016, p. 258) autoethnographers hold over individuals included in our narrative means our sense of responsibility should be enhanced, not diminished.

5.2.2 *Guidance on relational ethics in autoethnography*

The guidance on relational ethics in autoethnography varies in quality and consistency (Tolich, 2010; Campbell, 2016c). The lack of a "coherent set of ethical principles" (Andrew, 2017, p. 11) is a continuing source of discontent. Nevertheless, many useful discussions around relational ethics exist. Established autoethnographers often provide advice based on their experience (Ellis, 2004, 2007; Adams, 2008; Wall, 2008; Ellis, 2009; Ellis et al., 2011; Adams et al., 2015; Tullis, 2016). More recently, I was encouraged to see the inclusion of auto/biographical reflection and

autoethnography, albeit fleetingly, in the latest edition of the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (British Educational Research Association, 2018).

Tolich (2010) and Tullis (2016) have offered specific and detailed guidelines for would-be autoethnographers (**Figures 5.1 and 5.2**). The guidelines do cover somewhat of the same ground, however. Tullis' (2016) rules explicitly rehearse pre-existing advice on ethical autoethnography. Nevertheless, together they provide an overview of the advice most frequently provided to autoethnographers.

Figure 5.1 *Tolich's (2010) 10 foundational guidelines for autoethnographers*

1	Respect participants' autonomy and the voluntary nature of participation, and document the informed consent processes that are foundational to qualitative inquiry.
2	Practice 'process consent', checking at each stage to make sure that participants still want to be part of the project.
3	Recognize the conflict of interest or coercive influence when seeking informed consent after writing the manuscript.
4	Consult with others.
5	Do not publish anything that you would not show the persons mentioned in the text.
6	Beware of internal confidentiality.
7	Treat any autoethnography as an inked tattoo by anticipating your future vulnerability.
8	No story should harm others, and if harm is unavoidable, take steps to minimize harm.
9	Use a nom de plume if you are unable to minimize risk.
10	Assume all people mentioned in the text will read it someday.

Figure 5.2 *Tullis' (2016) ethical guidelines for autoethnography*

Do no harm to self or others
Consult your IRB (institutional review board)
Get informed consent

Practice process consent and explore the ethics of consequence

Do a member check

Do not present publicly or publish anything you would not show the person mentioned in
the text

Do not underestimate the afterlife of a published narrative

Novice autoethnographers might feel inclined to follow the lists provide by Tolich (2010) and Tullis (2016) without question. I have resisted treating any such guidelines as canon. I am cautious of one-size-fits-all rules, especially where autoethnography is concerned. Of course, it would be easier to have, as Gingrich-Philbrook (2013) so fantastically puts it:

"a kind of a cross between an existential oven-timer and a drag-queen fairy godmother to look over your shoulder at the screen and say 'Bing! You're done, Honey; this shit is baked; anyone who tells you different, I will come over and stomp their ass?'" (p. 619).

Sadly, the ethical drag-queen fairy godmother has not made herself known to me. Nor do general guidelines work on a case by case basis. Guidelines do not free researchers from making or dealing with the consequences of ethical dilemmas as they arise (Sparkes, 2018).

5.3 How I approached relational ethics in this study

I have not been naive to the ethical issues arising from keeping a diary. Before I even began this study, colleagues and family members were asking, with some trepidation, what I was going to write about. The idea I might be recording secrets were ever present in questions like *"But, what are you going to say?"* and *"Are you really going to write down everything?"*.

I considered, at length, who and what I would be writing about. I viewed the guidelines as starting points, offering potential avenues for minimising harm. In the end, I focused on the following four options:

1. Obtaining consent
2. Anonymise all reference to intimate others
3. Fictionalise the account entirely
4. Purposefully refrain from mentioning events and occurrences, through mindful slippage

In the remainder of this first section, I explore the advice relating to each option in detail and justify the choices I made.

5.3.1 Gaining consent from intimate others

Is there a duty to obtain informed consent from individuals directly represented in autoethnographic narratives? Tolich (2010) and Tullis (2016) certainly believe securing informed consent is an absolute necessity. The first three of Tolich's (2010) foundational guidelines (**Figure 5.1**) are dedicated to consent. He draws heavily on *The Position Statement on Qualitative Research and IRBs* (**Figure 5.3**), created by the Congress of Qualitative Inquiry in 2007, which requires informed consent in all circumstances. Tullis (2016), equally, does not mince her words. She simply tells autoethnographers to "get informed consent" (p. 257). By securing informed consent, Tullis (2016) argues that individuals can make a voluntary and autonomous decision to appear in the story.

Figure 5.2 *The Position Statement on Qualitative Research and IRBs*

Consider, identify, and resolve conflicts of interest that might affect research participants, researchers, institutions, and research outcomes. Understand and use valid study designs for qualitative inquiry that respect the rights of individuals and protect the well-being of research participants. Apply standards of minimal risk as set forth in the Common Rule for the protection of human subjects in the conduct and practice of research. Involve and recruit participants according to best practices for weighing risks to individuals and benefits to society. Document their plans in study proposals for fulfilling responsibilities to research, institutions, sponsors,

and participants. Respect participants' autonomy and the voluntary nature of participation, and document the informed consent processes that are foundational to qualitative inquiry. Provide for and encourage communication with participants and respond to respondents' requests for information, withdrawal, or modifications to consent agreements in a timely and appropriate manner. Design and conduct qualitative studies in compliance with federal and local institutional requirements for the protection of human subjects in research.

I have a difficult relationship with the advice on consent. On the one hand, I accept that identifiable individuals can be vulnerable. I understand why autoethnographers are encouraged to discuss their work with persons appearing in their stories. I have been particularly troubled by narratives written about family members. Hampl (1999), for example, wrote a poem divulging her mother's epilepsy. Her mother read the poem before it was published and was outraged at the betrayal. Hampl responded with two arguments. First, she felt she had freed her mother from "the wicked witch of secrecy" (1999, p. 213). Secondly, she downplayed any possibility of her mother suffering harm because of the disclosure. The poem was eventually published with Hampl's mother's consent. However, her acquiescence was clearly a consequence of her devotion to Hampl and her wish to see her daughter succeed (Hampl, 1999). Consent was given, but, as Hampl's mother later made clear (Hampl, 1999), not fully, freely, and happily. I am inclined to agree with Couser's (2004) view that Hampl "violated her [mother's] privacy [and] also exploited her pride in a talented daughter" (p. 12).

Given my criticism of Hampl's choice, you might expect me to direct even stronger disapproval toward autoethnographers who write about family members without their consent. This occurs most obviously in autoethnographies about sexual abuse. The abuser's consent has clearly not been sought. However, I can see why consent would not be appropriate in these circumstances. I cannot imagine the trauma of being compelled to contact an abuser to seek permission to write about the abuse suffered. That is clearly unthinkable and at odds with the requirement to keep the researcher safe from harm. Requiring informed consent in these situations also risks keeping important research from being publicly shared and discussed. Rambo Ronai's (1997) autoethnography of the sexual abuse she suffered, for example, focuses on the little-explored phenomenon of being a daughter of a mother with a severe intellectual disability. I would not want the absence of consent, in these circumstances, to perpetuate a tendency to silence or sanitise research of this nature.

The Ethical Issues Form (**Appendix 4**) I was asked to complete before commencing this study included the question: "How will informed consent of research participants be acquired?". I was also invited to attach a draft informed consent form. In my response, I wrote that the data collected would be about myself, not other people. I said that I would not name any individuals, but I would inform my colleagues and students in the Student Law Office about my research and explain that they were not the focus of the study. I did what I promised. I made it clear that I was not watching or recording my students, or anyone else for that matter. I said that I genuinely did not know what I was going to write about, but the focus would always be on *my* lived experience. I would not, I made clear, be spying on my students' every move.

I answered the question on informed consent truthfully and to the best of my ability at the time. Looking back at the form, however, I am struck by how differently I would respond to the question today. Hindsight is a wonderful thing. Perhaps, if I had thought about it more at the time, I would have realised I would never make references to colleagues, friends, or family in my diary. I did not make that clear in my original form. That said, this raises an important point about the efficacy of ethics forms completed before the research commences and rarely revisited. I would have liked the opportunity to complete several interim reports, noting ethical issues that had arisen during the research and how I had dealt with the dilemmas. Checking in like this would be like the practice of process consent Ellis (2007) recommends once informed consent is given. Research evolves, and, whether consent is sought or not, researchers must be prepared to continuously evaluate the ethical questions that arise. Routinely re-visiting ethical forms might go some way to achieving that aim.

I did make reference to my interactions with my students. After all, I was writing about my experience teaching in the clinic. I have often wondered whether it would have been more ethically sound to have tried an alternative approach to consent, like showing the students my completed diary and asking if they were happy with the content. On the surface, this seems a good idea. However, whether I gave my students a informed consent form to sign, or showed them my diary and then asked for their blessing, a problem remains. There is always going to be a power imbalance between me and my students. I am supervising the students. I assess their work daily, giving feedback in person and remotely on documents and emails. Their mark for SLO makes up a substantial part of their final degree classification. I often provide references after the students have left the university. So, even if the students gave consent, would it be freely given? Would some students feel compelled to give consent due to a desire to keep on the

right side of me, or because they liked me, or because they wanted to help? I fear, in my desire to obtain the consent, this would end in a situation like Hampl's (1999) poem.

I could have asked my students to sign a form, before or after I wrote my diary, but I did not feel that was right in this situation. Ticking the informed consent box makes things easier, and may give superficial credibility to your study, but it does not resolve underlying ethical issues still in existence.

5.3.2 Anonymise all reference to intimate others

In my Ethical Issues Form (**Appendix 4**) I said I would refrain from naming any individuals in my diary. I did this. In my diary, I refer to my students as a homogenous group e.g. "the students". I do the same for clients.

Even when I am speaking about a specific student, I do not include any identifying features. For example in the entry on *4 November 2015*, I express my frustration that a document has not been sent out despite my instruction to do so (**Figure 5.4**). I refer to the student as "someone". In fact, only I (and now you) know that "someone" relates to two students working together. They had both failed to send the document. Perhaps you could pick that detail up from the use of "we" later in the entry when I recall their response to being asked why they failed to do as I asked. However, the students are not identifiable. I do not give any indication as to age, gender, or race. I do not speak of the way they dress, their hairstyle, or the accent with which they spoke.

Figure 5.3 *Diary entry from 4 November 2015*

Fuming. The movement from fume to not so fume. But still fuming beneath the surface and sense of panic and having no control over your own time management.

What do you do when someone is working on a completely different timescale to your own? It has been a week since I asked for a document to be sent out. It has not been sent out. It has remained in the inbox, not doing anything. I raced to check that email and return feedback before I left to go to my conference. I did that because I want to be a good supervisor. I don't want to leave students hanging, waiting for me to help them progress their work. I felt good that

I had worked hard to get the feedback back to them. They could then send it out. But it remained in the inbox. And when I have asked why it hasn't been sent out, I am met with confusion – “well, we thought you wouldn't be able to look at it until you came back from the conference” “well, you said it didn't need to go out until next Thursday”. But I said in the email “here you go, please send it out”. Is there any way I can be clearer? I want to be petulant and say how I worked really hard to get that document back to them so that they could move on, so I was a good supervisor. But it sounds childish. So I don't say it. I say that I'm concerned for them. I want them to do well. And they can't do well if the case isn't progressing. They leave and I am still fuming under the surface. I have no control. I am dancing to their tune. Should I have gone to the conference and done the work when I got back? Would they have cared? Noticed? Now we are all not very happy with each other.

In some entries I speak directly to the student. For example, in my diary entry for 11 November 2015 I have a one-sided conversation with a student who has breached office procedure (extract at **Figure 5.5**). Again, I include no 'clues' as to the identity of the student. Supervisors who I spoke to at the time may vaguely recall some details about the individual concerned. Gender is a good example, as I would have referred to the student by the relevant pronoun. However, even supervisors I shared an office with at the time and may have been a listening ear when I debated what to do about the breach, would struggle, I think, to remember the full name of the student or pick them out of a lineup.

What about the students themselves, though? Anonymisation may shield my students from being recognisable to others, but it does not protect them from self-recognition (Couser, 2004). I have often wondered whether the students I taught in the 2015-16 academic year would be able to recognise themselves in my diary. I suspect they would only be able to do so where the entry speaks of a specific and unusual incident, such as a breach of procedure. In my 8 years of teaching in the law clinic, I have had difficult conversations with several students. Confidential papers have been put in the wrong bin. Legal advice has been sent to an incorrect email address. Client documents have been drafted outside of the confines of the clinic and saved somewhere other than our protected server. However, in the 2015-16 academic year, only one of my students breached procedure and was subsequently removed from live client work. That student (and possibly the others they worked with in the clinic) would likely identify him/herself despite my attempts to hide their identity. Might they feel betrayed? Might they be angry at their inability to put their side of the story across? Might they dispute my characterisation of them as a student

who did not care about their client, the clinic, or me? Anonymisation is a useful tool. It goes some way to protecting the identities of those forming part of autoethnographic narratives, but it does not entirely remove the potential for harm.

Figure 5.4 *Extract from diary entry from 11 November 2015*

What possessed you to do it? Why did you think it was okay to breach procedures like this? We've gone through the need for confidentiality, the policies, the procedures, the rules. We've talked about why those rules are important. We wouldn't put in place things like separate accounts, swipe cards etc if it wasn't something important. Why have you done this?

Why don't you seem to care? Is it me – am I too not 'scary' enough? Did I, in some way, give signs that it wouldn't be a bother if you didn't do things the right way. Should I have taken you to task a few weeks ago when I suspected that you were not pulling your weight, and that others through their deeds and words were suggesting that they were annoyed by this? I wanted to give you time to bed in, and to prove that you could pull it together. Maybe you just needed time. Maybe when things got going, it would bring it to life and the immediacy of giving real legal advice to real people would sink in.

5.3.3 Fictionalisation

In a fictional account, autoethnographers use “distancing or abstracting” (Adams et al., 2015, p. 61) techniques to preserve identities. My favourite example of fictionalisation in autoethnography is Sparkes' (2007) story of life at an imagined university, the University of Wannabee Academic. We follow 'Jim' as he attends meetings with the Vice-Chancellor about staff publications. We see him being forced to tell a member of staff his published works have been deemed derisory. We sense how he tries to escape from an impact factor obsessed colleague known as The Weasel. These characters are all fictional constructs. The scenarios are made up. However, there is some truth in the story. It is "inspired by partial happenings, fragmented memories, echoes of conversations, whispers in corridors, fleeting glimpses of myriad reflections seen through broken glass, and multiple layers of fiction and narrative imaginings" (Sparkes, 2007, p. 522).

Fictionalisation would have given me the opportunity to create a more vivid account. I could have devised named characters, and fleshed them out with colourful descriptions of appearance, scent, movement, fashion sense, and behavioural traits. However, whilst the students and clients in my “ethnographic fiction science” (Watson, 2000) would look very different from their real-life counterparts, the scenarios would have been the same. I would not have been able to change the happenings that occurred, for they are at the heart of the questions I am trying to answer. I also wanted to see and use my own words, as I wrote them on the day. Ultimately, fictionalisation was not an option for me in this study.

5.3.4 *Mindful slippage*

Several years ago, when I began writing about the ethics of autoethnographic research (Campbell, 2016c, 2017b), I discovered the notion of “mindful slippage” (Medford, 2006). Medford (2006) uses the term to describe her “erasure” (p. 856) from a colleague’s autoethnography. Her colleague referred to his relationship as monogamous. Medford had good reason to disagree. This was not her truth, but, as she ponders, “maybe he sincerely weighed the consequences and came down on the side of protecting her instead of me because he is committed to her now and bringing up our past could compromise their future” (2006, p. 857). Mindful slippage arrives in the space between “what we know (or what we cannot remember) and what we write” (Medford, 2006, p. 853).

Medford was annoyed when her colleague refrained from mentioning their relationship. She questioned whether it was ethically right to “abbreviate, edit, or otherwise modify our life stories” (2006, p. 853). Doloriert & Sambrook (2009), on the other hand, suggest mindful slippage could be adopted positively in order to minimise harm, especially where doctoral students feel the pull towards revealing our vulnerable self. I agree. Mindful slippage is at the forefront of my approach to ethical autoethnography. Like a hidden software programme, it ran in the background every time I came to write. Many events were lost to time. Many conversations were purposefully forgotten. How did I make those choices? In all honesty, I do not know. There was no formula. There was no set of self-imposed rules. A gut feeling, perhaps, that the ‘thing’ should remain unsaid and unheard. In the pursuit of an autoethnographic ethic, mindful slippage felt like the course of action most likely to prevent harm.

5.4 Obtaining ethical approval

Obtaining ethical approval for autoethnographic research is a complex minefield. The position taken by individual Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) appear to vary in the extreme (Ellis, 2004; Rambo, 2007; Murray, Pushor, & Renihan, 2011; Forber-Pratt, 2015; Bochner & Ellis, 2016). Ellis recalls a “spectrum” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 143) of contradictory responses over the years, with some IRBs requiring autoethnographers to gain retrospective consent, and others denying such consent exists. Some would-be autoethnographers have been required to complete extensive forms replete with “positivist assumptions” (Ellis, 2004, p. 256). Others have been told their work does not constitute research, and therefore ethical approval is not needed (Ellis, 2004; Ernst & Vallack, 2015; Bochner & Ellis, 2016). The situation is so confusing entire sections of autoethnography textbooks are dedicated to dealing with IRBs (Ellis, 2004; Bochner & Ellis, 2016).

Autoethnographers overwhelmingly portray the approval process as combative. IRBs are regularly positioned as “remote gatekeepers” who have “instrumentalised, managed, and sanitised” (Tomaselli, 2018, p. 169) research. Autoethnographers are advised to prepare for the IRB’s rejection or disapproval of autoethnographic methods, and to “fight the red tape” (Forber-Pratt, 2015, p. 830). A notable example is Rambo’s (2007) account of having an accepted manuscript blocked by her IRB. The article, to be published in *Deviant Behaviour*, detailed Rambo’s “falling apart” (2007, p. 355) after getting tenure and almost having an affair with a student. “If it were mine”, her departmental chair declared, “I’d bury it under the nearest rock - deep” (2007, p. 356). The IRB declined to give ethical approval because the student at the heart of the story, though anonymous, had not given his consent. They would not, however, approve any attempt to gain the student’s consent due to his vulnerable position. Rambo was stuck. She subsequently offered to make changes to the manuscript, including writing under a pseudonym so that neither she, nor the institution, would be identified. The IRB maintained its position, and the article remains unpublished.

I can appreciate where Rambo’s IRB was coming from. The student was, like Rambo, a survivor of incest. Student-teacher relationships are, as Ellis wrote to Rambo, “sticky” (2007, p. 354). Put together, it is easy to see how the IRB judged the student to be a vulnerable person. I cannot, however, understand why the article could not have been published following the use of a pseudonym, plus additional alterations to further mask identities. Reading between the lines,

other issues appeared to be at play here. Informal conversations Rambo had with colleagues about the matter included some macabre references to her putting herself in “harms’ way” (2007, p. 360). What, or for that matter who, was going to bring harm upon her? Would she be subject to workplace harassment? Would her applications for promotion be rejected? Would she be sacked? Much like Sparkes’ (2018) former employer, Rambo’s institution appeared keen to avoid being embroiled in any potential scandal. An exploration of the role of an IRB is beyond the scope of this thesis, but with tales circulating of autoethnographers in the United States being sued (Bénard, 2018), the trend for IRBs to turn their eye toward protecting their institution (Lincoln & Tierney, 2004) may continue.

Rambo’s IRB saw research as the systematic gathering and analysing of information (Rambo, 2007). Rambo argued vociferously that she should not be subject to IRB approval because her autoethnography did not fulfill the definition. Rambo was unsuccessful, but many autoethnographers are liberated from IRB scrutiny due to restrictive guidelines as to what constitutes research. I appreciate the relief autoethnographers may feel if their IRB decides it does not need to review autoethnographic work. The prospect of completing another long form does not typically fill any researcher with overwhelming joy. Yet, I am concerned. Declaring autoethnography as exempt from the ethical approval process sends a message that autoethnographic research and practice is devoid of ethical issues. It is not. Here I look to Ernst & Vallack (2015), whose autoethnographic research into changes made in their school did not require ethical approval. They wrote that autoethnography gave them a “license” (p.153) to tell their story. I have no idea whether Ernst & Vallack’s (2015) account is fictional, whether they applied mindful slippage, or if the names of the children they clearly care about profoundly are real or pseudonyms. They do not say. The more I return to their autoethnography, the more it speaks to me as an educationalist. Yet, the word ‘license’ sticks in my throat every time. Autoethnography should not be used as a free pass, giving the researcher the discretion to write as they wish. Autoethnography is not a workaround.

Like Bochner & Ellis (2016), I believe that the process of submitting a research proposal to an IRB can be a useful exercise. Preparing the submission and responding to the IRB’s questions can assist in clarifying thinking and may raise important questions not previously considered. I certainly had this experience when I applied to my own IRB for ethical approval to carry out this study. I completed the relevant Ethical Issues Form on 27 August 2015 (**Appendix 4**). Just under

a month later, on 24 September 2015, I received a response by email. **Figure 5.6** includes an extract from the email.

Figure 5.5 *Anonymised extract of email from ethics committee dated 24 September 2015*

I am writing to you about your ethics approval request.

The reviewer has given me the following feedback for you to action:

The reviewer has a number of concerns regarding the PI collecting data in an environment where those who will inevitably form part of her narrative have not given their informed consent. Difficulties may also arise with adequate anonymization of data within the narrow confines of the SLO. The researcher states she is using "all her electronic devices" which are password protected, to make notes throughout the day. There is a reference to an iPad and iPhone, although other devices may feature – this is not clear. It is also not clear who may have access to those devices as many devices such as iPhone are password protected and yet accessible by family members for example.

The PI states: 'My intention is to use this data in the DLaw thesis. It may form part of a chapter which discusses how I came to decide upon my data collection methods'. This suggests (although it is not clear) that she is trialling this research method to see whether she should use it in her DLaw thesis – so if it works in this pilot it will be used later as the primary research method. Alternatively it could suggest that research question in the DLaw thesis (which I am unclear about) will be answered by different data collection methods. This will need further clarification by the PI.

The researcher is asked to re-submit the ethics form clarifying:

- *The link between the researcher's diaries and the main data collection method to be conducted in the DLaw thesis.*
- *How she intends to improve data collection given the concerns raised by the panel about informed consent and participant anonymity in the study. Although the PI states that little if any consideration of ethical issues has been given in many of the autoethnographical studies*

*she has looked at, it would assist the panel to understand how ethics has been handled in similar studies where ethical considerations **have** been addressed. The PI is encouraged to explore this in more detail.*

•Clarification is needed around the proposed timing of the diarising (passion planning). Is this in sessions? Does it include recordings, photos? More detail is needed here.

•It is also not clear whether this research method will be complemented by or complements other research methodologies in the study. Further clarification is needed around this.

I would be grateful if you could submit your amended request to me so that I can forward it on to your reviewer.

If you have any questions then please let me know and I will do my best to help.

Looking back at the Ethical Issues Form I submitted (**Appendix 4**), I laugh at my own naivety. I am struck by how generic my proposal was, and how little I had thought through the practicalities of my data collection. Of course, at the time, I thought it was an excellent proposal. I felt I had a very good understanding of autoethnography, and all I required was a tick in the box. I was, unsurprisingly, fairly indignant about my reviewer's response. I felt they had not understood my chosen methodology at all. I felt they were hindering my ability to collect data as and when I pleased. Eventually, however, I calmed down. I asked several colleagues who I knew to be experienced qualitative researchers for support, and, with their help, I set about responding to the reviewer's concerns.

In my updated version of the form (**Appendix 5**), I included two new sections explaining the autoethnographic method. I answered the questions about informed consent (although I still think I could have done better - see **section 5.3.1**). More importantly, I think, I revised my ideas on data collection and storage. Rather than making notes here, there, and everywhere, I decided to create one document and keep it on my institution's secure drive. I submitted my new form on 7 October 2015. On 21 October 2015, I received a response by email. **Figure 5.7** includes an extract from the email.

Figure 5.7 *Anonymised extract of email from ethics committee dated 21 October 2015*

I am pleased to confirm that following review of the above proposal, ethical approval has been granted on the basis of this proposal and subject to compliance with the University policies on ethics and consent and any other policies applicable to your individual research.

All researchers must also notify this office of the following:

- Any significant changes to the study design;
- Any incidents which have an adverse effect on participants, researchers or study outcomes;
- Any suspension or abandonment of the study;

We wish you well in your research endeavours.

Going through the ethical approval process made me think. My reviewer's comments, although irritating at the time, focused my mind on where my data would be and who would have access to it. My concern for confidentiality remains to this day. I still treat my diary with great care. For example, I have only once printed a physical copy. I placed it in my bag to take home, and religiously checked where it was the entire journey. The IRB process made me a better, more conscientious researcher.

In my institution you must complete an ethics form before starting your research. Rambo (2007) submitted (although under duress) her manuscript to a committee after it was written. I wonder whether Rambo's issues would have been avoided if she had been required to present her research proposal at its inception, rather than after the event. I know how attached I get to my own autoethnographic work and I understand the frustration at being told that something you have worked hard to create cannot see the light of day. I imagine some autoethnographers would angrily fight against any suggestion that an IRB (or any other part of the institution) should have the final say on what they could write about. I too am nervous about censorship. However, I do feel we should be prepared to work with rather than resist ethical frameworks and institutional procedures.

5.5 Self-care in autoethnographic research

Save for some notable examples (Chatham-Carpenter, 2010; Adams et al., 2015; Dashper, 2015), self-care in autobiographical writing is rarely covered in any detail. In this thesis, and elsewhere (Campbell, 2016a, 2016c), I have reinforced autoethnography's ability to improve our understanding of society and culture and disrupt traditional power structures. By contrast, few studies have examined the potentially negative effects of autoethnography. In this section, I reflect on the consequences of reading some very disturbing stories, the detrimental effect writing autoethnographically could have on career ambitions, and the danger of immersing yourself in your own life.

5.5.1 *Disturbing stories*

Autoethnographic researchers will inevitably consume a significant number of autoethnographic works throughout their career. At the time of writing this, I have five lever arch files on the bed in front of my writing desk bulging with autoethnographic articles. My desk is adorned with a stack of autoethnographic books. My electronic reference library contains 550 records. I have, in the past three years of this study, read a lot of autoethnography.

Some autoethnographies have had such impact on me (Campbell, 2016c) I cannot return to them without bracing myself. Most of them focus on child sex abuse. The deeply reflexive and literary nature of autoethnography means the work transcends beyond the provision of factual details of the abuse which took place. Instead, you are there, in the room, when it is happening. When I first read Rambo Ronai's (1997) account of the incestuous abuse she suffered as a child, at the hands of her parents, I felt physically sick. I was travelling on a commuter train. I later wrote in my literature review spreadsheet that the study was so explicit I did not want the people on the train around me to see it. I remember trying to hide the paper, curling the edges so it covered the text I had already read. Even now, as I write this, I am haunted by some of the dialogue. My heart rate has increased, and I have what I can only describe as an emptiness in the pit of my stomach. I have unconsciously twisted the toes of my right foot backwards and to the side and pushed deep into the pile of my carpet so that only now, when the pain has got too much, I have realised what I have done. I wonder if I am remembering it, as though it had happened to me.

I had a similar reaction to Custer's (2014) recollection of abuse perpetrated by his mother's boyfriend. I am not religious, but the references to Christianity mixed with child abuse ("Christ makes me lie down in green pastures where we film a pornographic scene of mutual lust" (Custer, 2014, pp. 3-4)) make me deeply uncomfortable. Despite Custer's (2014) interesting observations about autoethnography as a research method, I find myself avoiding this work.

Bochner insists I should be congratulated for not being the kind of "“good” academic reader" (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a, p. 23) who keeps a critical distance from what I read. I take his point that few people can say their research profoundly affects their readers (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a). I understand that, traditionally, researchers have been required to be "passive and unengaged" (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a, p. 23) and my response to the first-person accounts I read serves to emphasise the difference. Nevertheless, this does not mean that readers are adequately prepared for what they might feel both at the time and for many years on. I do not have, as Bochner suggests, "a readiness to scream under some provocation" (Ellis & Bochner, 1996a, p. 23), and yet I would describe the autoethnographies mentioned above as harrowing.

I was alone when I read the articles that continue to affect me to this day. I did not speak to anyone about my reaction, even in passing. I was, in respect of some of the autoethnographies of abuse, ashamed at what I had read. I felt like I had participated in something utterly disgusting. Even if I had felt inclined to share my feelings, I wonder how I would have brought it up in conversation - *"Hey, I just read this really disturbing story where a child is abused by its parents and I cannot get the part where the child pleads for it to stop out of my head. Fancy discussing it, so I feel better?"*. Autoethnographic researchers should be made aware, from the outset, of the vicarious trauma (Nikischer, 2018) they may encounter as a result of engaging with this type of work.

5.5.2 *The impact of writing autoethnographically on an academic career*

In this study I have turned my gaze on myself, an academic employed by a higher education institution. In my diary I have revealed thoughts and feelings that would normally remain in my mind, or spoken aloud with colleagues and friends but ultimately unrecorded. My story is set in my institution. My institution is easily identifiable. It is there on the front of this thesis. My diary entries expose custom and practice in my academic world and divulges personal opinions and behaviours I might otherwise strive to hide.

Autoethnographic writing can negatively affect an academic career (Sikes, 2006; Rambo, 2016; Sparkes, 2018). The experiences written about do not even have to be recent. Past lives can come back to haunt autoethnographers, especially in an academic context. For example, before entering academia Rambo worked as an exotic dancer. This, entirely irrelevant, fact may have remained hers to reveal at will, had she not chosen to write autoethnographically about her experience. In an academic employment panel, a Dean commented, “You’re not seriously considering hiring a stripper, are you?” (Rambo, 2016, p. 7).

I have harboured maternalistic concerns about Custer’s career ever since reading his complex exploration of being the victim of paedophilia. Towards the end of his article, Custer mentions he is a graduate student seeking to become a teacher/researcher in transpersonal psychology. I am not saying this is right, but I did worry that passages like “Christ is my shepherd, and I want nothing more than to do the dirty with him. Christ leads me through the path of darkness into a back room filled with gloryholes” (Custer, 2014, p. 3) may not carry favour with academic boards. In an attempt to obliterate my fears, I looked him up. I cannot find any further publications, and I cannot see any affiliation with an academic institution. Of course, there are multiple explanations as to why this might be. He may have decided to simply follow another path. Yet, my failure to find Custer publishing frequently and/or teaching only reinforces my unease.

In **Chapter 2** I write in some detail about Sparkes’ (2007) fictional autoethnography, regarding the impact of the (as it was then called) Research Assessment Exercise on the University of Wannabee Academic. Without naming any real-life institutions or individuals, Sparkes draws attention to “the deeply affective somatic crisis that many academics were experiencing in their universities” (2018, p. 494). After I first read Sparkes’ article, I pondered how his institution and colleagues felt about the publication. Did colleagues recognise themselves as ‘Steve’ the research framework obsessed ‘Weasel’? More pressingly perhaps, what was Sparkes’ Vice-Chancellor’s reaction to autoethnographic work that speaks “truth to power” (Sparkes, 2018, p. 495) even in a fictional context?

Seeing that Sparkes had joined the Professoriate and continued to publish prolifically on autoethnographic research and practice probably lulled me into a false sense of security. In 2018, I was shocked to discover that, following the publication of his article, Sparkes had been called to a number of unsatisfactory meetings with increasingly senior management (Sparkes, 2018).

His final meeting, with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, was ostensibly to talk about (fresh) criticism of his research profile. This topic lasted 10 minutes. The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to the elephant in the room - the embarrassment Sparkes had caused the Vice-Chancellor. *Times Higher Education* (2007) had written a piece, 'Bollocks': *RAE paper assesses the RAE*, naming Sparkes and his institution. The article featured a half-page photo of the Vice-Chancellor with two young women from his team at a *Times Higher Education* awards ceremony. Rather chillingly, in the meeting Sparkes was repeatedly asked who paid his wages (Sparkes, 2018). The implication was that the university had control over the content of its employee's research. Here, the university was behaving as an intimate other (Franklin, 2018), demanding to be protected from harm. After 22 years of service, Sparkes left the institution. His story, shared 11 years after the event (Sparkes, 2018), is a cautionary tale if ever there was one.

I used to be under the misapprehension that career risks associated with autoethnography applied only to early stage academics. A significant amount of autoethnographies I read were written by Professors, with some reaching prominence as Emeritus Professor (Sally Sambrook), Distinguished Professors (Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner) and Distinguished Emeritus Professor (Laurel Richardson). I saw their elevated status as a protective shield against the glare of suspicion, skepticism, and snorting derision (Campbell, 2016a). I was wrong. Writing autoethnographically in academia is risky no matter how experienced or senior you may be. It also appears that fictionalisation is no protection against harm. Gore (2013) says that "in fiction, there are certain prices we do not have to pay" (p. 60). Given Sparkes' experience, I am not so sure.

Sparkes (2018) suggests that it is both a good and bad time to be an autoethnographer. Autoethnography has come of age (Sparkes, 2018); an established (if not still controversial) methodology. Yet, as academics, we are subject to the "pernicious and discriminatory effects of the audit culture, NPM practices, and neoliberal ideologies" (Sparkes, 2018, p. 496). Heeding Sparkes' warning, I scoured my diary for phrases that could be misconstrued as a critique of or a sideswipe at my institution. In the end, I did not feel I needed to make any adjustments. I had throughout been applying mindful slippage. I had purposefully refrained from mentioning institutional politics. I had not included heated conversations with colleagues about workloads. I had not moaned about unfamiliar members of staff sending me urgent emails late at night, with unrealistic and anxiety-inducing expectations. I dared not diarise how some days I felt my law clinic work was entirely pointless. The one time I did tread down this path, I removed the

paragraph as soon as I typed it. The fear washed over me once the words were exposed on the screen. I have used mindful slippage positively in order to minimise harm to myself and my career. My slippage is deliberate and acknowledged, not swept under the carpet, as are the reasons for my ‘forgetfulness’.

5.5.3 *Protecting the boundary between the public and private domains*

Sharing life experiences through autoethnographic research can send shockwaves rippling far beyond the professional sphere. You are ‘out there’; your story is available for all to read, at leisure, time and time again. This is especially the case if your research is distributed online free of charge. At some point in time, for example, this thesis will be easily accessed through my institution’s web portal. A simple Google search of my name will lead strangers, long-forgotten acquaintances, school pals, ex-colleagues, past and current best friends, and family members to a year’s worth of diary entries filled with private loves, hates, and remembrances I might prefer to forget.

How can you protect the boundary between the public-private domain? How much is too much? What do you keep hidden, and what do you expose? My instinct when answering these questions is to return to the notion of mindful slippage – an instinctual sense to let something slide into the ether rather than remain permanently on the page. I did this with my paper on mental health illness (Campbell, 2018), my most personal piece of autoethnographic writing to date. I chose to “tell my secrets” (p.242) but I also controlled the extent of my own disclosure in order to protect myself. Whilst I remain a great believer in autoethnography’s ability to provide insight into under-theorised narratives, there are some parts of the story that are not for public consumption. It is up to each autoethnographer to decide where their own threshold lies.

That said, I finish with a warning. However much you pour over your manuscripts, carefully choosing what to soften, to change, and to remove, the fact still remains that autoethnographic research demands your story. You are still at the heart of the piece and you are likely to be revealing intimate insights into your world. You will be vulnerable. If you want to “dwell in the flux of lived experience” (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 431), this is bargain you make when pursuing autoethnography.

5.5.4 Did this autoethnographic study contribute to my mental health illness?

In August 2016, it dawned on me that I was quite unwell. For many months I had been secretly getting up in the middle of the night, heading to the kitchen to 'get a drink'. In reality, I was checking my work emails in the dark without my partner knowing. I could not stop thinking about work, and all the things I had to do. Towards the end of the month, I felt completely out of control. In the office, I clung to an imaginary ladder waving precariously in the wind. I was, at the same time, highly emotional and highly numbed. Hazy, but on the verge of tears. Eventually, I just broke. A colleague ran down the corridor and found help. I was suffering from depression and anxiety. I had suicidal ideations. I did not return to work for three months (Campbell, 2018).

This vignette was published in 2016, in the early days of my foray into autoethnography:

"Vignette 3: Self-care

When I excitedly follow my partner around the kitchen rambling excitedly about this new methodology I have discovered, he stops, turns to me and says:

"Actually, I think this is quite dangerous for you".

"Why?", I blurt out in a somewhat teenage-like way, with facial expressions to match.

He doesn't answer directly. Something about too much introspection (though he doesn't use the word). Something about thinking too much and getting carried away. I am disappointed and frustrated that he isn't as excited as me, but I know exactly what he's trying to say. I can already feel this research ticking away at the back of my head, none stop. If I go down this path the research button will always be flicked "on" and never "off" (Campbell, 2016c, pp. 100-101).

I have always wondered if autoethnography contributed in some way to my mental health decline. I cannot say that engaging in autoethnographic research was the cause. The root of the problem lay in poor working practices and generally doing too much, plus out of control brain chemistry. Anxiety was, in hindsight, an underlying condition that had been with me some time.

It still is. But could the immersive, deeply reflexive nature of autoethnographic practice have been a contributory factor?

Some critics of autoethnography focus on the perception that autoethnographers spend short periods of time on their research, rather than lengthy immersion (Fine, 1999). "What better", Fine (1999) proposes sarcastically, "than transforming the intensive labor of field research into the armchair pleasure of "me-search"" (p. 534). This has not been my experience. Throughout this study, whether at work or at home, I have been forever in the field (Adams et al., 2015). De Vries (2012) puts a positive spin on this "data immersion gone wild" (p. 362) level of engagement. Yet, at times, I felt so overwhelmed, so absorbed in autoethnography, I looked to stop and step away. Writing down my emotions seemed to make them come alive and, rather than forgetting, I could not escape my thoughts (**Figure 5.8**). Even when I took a break, I felt guilty. I worried that I was failing to capture emotions, events, and experiences (**Figure 5.8**). I 'wrote' diary entries in my mind. I talked to myself incessantly.

Figure 5.6 *Extract from diary entry dated 11 March 2016*

I've thought so much over the past few weeks, so it's annoying that I haven't journaled. I just haven't felt like it to be honest. It swims around my head and sometimes putting it down here makes it come alive, and that makes it more painful, more real. At least in my head I can blur the lines a bit. In black and white, you can't escape it.

Reflecting on, and re-telling, difficult or distressing experiences is far from a benign activity (Robertson, Carpenter, & Donovan-Hall, 2017). Chatham-Carpenter (2010), for example, felt "a strong pull" (p.1) back into anorexia as she engaged in the topic for her autoethnographic research. Her article is regularly used as an example of the dangers of reliving trauma (Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013; Adams et al., 2015; Bochner & Ellis, 2016). However, one part of her story rarely receives any coverage, and it is an aspect I find incredibly troubling. Chatham-Carpenter had some difficulty finding an outlet for her autoethnographic work on anorexia. She sent her manuscript to one publisher. It was rejected. She made changes and sent it to another. The reviewers encouraged Chatham-Carpenter to be more vulnerable. One wanted her to "explore her feelings on paper" so they could "feel the pain too" (Chatham-Carpenter, 2010, p. 5). As Chatham-Carpenter (2010) herself asks, "is there such a thing as being too vulnerable for one's own good when doing autoethnography?" (p. 6). Should reviewers push an already at-risk

person to develop a richer autoethnography when this might lead to further harm? I echo Doloriert & Sambrook's (2009) fears that, by equating vulnerability with successful autoethnography, researchers may be drawn to exposing traumatic and harrowing experiences they may later regret. Autoethnography may require courage (Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013), persistence (Anderson & Glass-Coffin, 2013) and anguish (Josselson, 1996) but our pursuit of it should not come at the cost of our health.

Of course, I will never know for certain if autoethnographic practice was a contributory factor to my ill health. However, it is worth noting that I stopped keeping any kind of journal when I returned to work in January 2017 and have not returned to the diary as a method of data collection since. I suspect I will use a diary again in the future, for another autoethnographic study. However, I will do so with a greater awareness of the potential dangers of immersion.

5.6 The ethical value of autoethnography

In this chapter so far, I have focused on what might be seen as the negative effects and risks of autoethnographic practice. Now I turn briefly to the ethical value of autoethnography, drawing on some of the themes I raised in **Chapter 4**.

Storytelling is both a political act (Richardson, 1992) and a form of testimony (Grant, 2010a). The story itself functions in a way similar to oral history and therefore serves as a communal resource and as relational meaning making (Grant, 2010a). In representing deeply personal encounter(s), autoethnographers are preserving human experience for future generations. Additionally, autoethnographic research often serves to raise awareness of narratives that may not traditionally be rendered in public discourse. As Richardson (1992) notes, even interpretivists "inherit an academic culture that holds a traditional authority over them. That culture suppresses and devalues its members' subjective experiences" (p. 125).

In terms of this study, I am attempting to build a body of scholarship that gives testament to my experiences and serves as a cultural resource. Law clinic supervisors have stories to tell. I hope my exploration of my lived experience as a supervisor positively encourages a movement toward greater "social accounting" (Grant, 2010a, p. 113) of law clinic participation.

5.7 Concluding comments

In this chapter, I have critically examined the ethics of autoethnographic research. I have sought to justify my position as an autoethnographer who is seeking to be ethical in her work. In doing so, I anticipate others may find fault with the choices I have made (for example, not to pursue informed consent from my students). However, I have attempted to be as candid as possible in order to contribute to the existing discourse on autoethnographic ethics and to demonstrate that ethical dilemmas in this field cannot be placed into neat boxes.

Chapter 6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Revisiting my research question and the rationale for this study

I set out to investigate the use of autoethnography to explore my lived experience as a university law clinic supervisor. My overarching research question asked: *what can autoethnography reveal about my lived experience as a university law clinic supervisor?*

My research question was underpinned by two objectives:

1. *To investigate the rewards, challenges, and limitations of autoethnographic research and writing; and*
2. *To offer fresh insight into the lived experience of an academic tasked with supervising law students providing legal advice to real clients.*

Ultimately, I sought to bring together autoethnography and law clinic supervision. I wanted to connect my insider experience to broader conversations about the culture of clinical legal education, whilst also offering, for the first time, an in-depth guide for clinicians seeking to adopt autoethnographic practice. This thesis presented me with an important opportunity to advance the understanding of a key feature of clinical legal education and to make a methodological contribution.

6.2 The structure of this chapter

This chapter discusses what happened during the year I kept a reflective diary about my supervisory experiences. Taking my cue from Wall (2006, 2008, 2014), I also examine the meaning(s) of my experience(s) in the cultural context within which they occurred.

In line with my objectives, this chapter is essentially split into two halves. I begin by focusing on law clinic supervision. I explore the themes and sub-themes I identified in my autoethnographic data (**Chapter 4**) and situate my findings in the context of the existing literature on law clinic supervision (**Chapter 3**). I go on to reflect on the contribution this thesis makes to clinical legal education research, specifically highlighting the value my autoethnographic data offers to a field

still in its infancy. I also draw on emerging literature on law teacher well-being to make practical recommendations for the benefit of new and experienced clinic supervisors.

In the second half of this chapter, I focus on autoethnography as a method and methodology. I return to some key controversies surrounding the use of autoethnography and respond to questions my peers have frequently challenged me to answer as I engaged in this study. Finally, I conclude this chapter by examining my methodological contributions to autoethnographic research.

6.3 Findings from my reflexive diary

In **Chapter 4**, I worked through Braun & Clarke's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis and applied them to my data. I also gave a micro-autoethnographic account (Collins, 2015) of my experience of the analytic process. At the end of **Chapter 4** I presented my final mind map with themes and sub-themes. However, I did not go on to discuss any of my findings.

In this section, I explore each of my themes/sub-themes and corresponding diary entries and return to the existing literature on law clinic supervision. A copy of my diary is at **Appendix 1**, but to make matters easier **Appendix 3** maps extracts from my diary against the relevant themes/sub-themes.

Many of my diary entries contain spelling mistakes and grammatical errors. For authenticity, I have left the entries as they were written.

6.3.1 Theme 1: I have a multifaceted relationship with my students

The diary entries reveal my multifaceted relationship with my students. I am fulfilling four different roles; teacher, lawyer, colleague, and mentor. Sometimes one role comes to the fore more strongly than the others, but at other times they also converge.

As a teacher

I make a limited number of explicit references to being a "teacher" in my diary (see, for example, 7 October 2015 and 11 November 2015 in **Appendix 1**). However, my desire to react to and treat

students as new learners is present in a number of entries. For example, in a diary entry from 11 November 2015, I reflect on the way I have dealt with an under-performing student:

“Should I have taken you to task a few weeks ago when I suspected that you were not pulling your wright, and that others through their deeds and words were suggesting that they were annoyed by this? I wanted to give you time to bed in, and to prove that you could pull it together. Maybe you just needed time. Maybe when things got going, it would bring it to life and the immediacy of giving real legal advice to real people would sink in”.

In this extract, my focus is clearly on the student. I query whether I have done the right thing in giving the student time “to bed in”. From an educator’s perspective, this is an entirely reasonable course of action. I wanted to give the student space to get to grips with an unfamiliar environment. I had refrained from taking the student “to task” and instead had attempted (albeit unsuccessfully) to be patient and understanding.

In another diary entry 3 months later, I reflect with greater purpose on the balancing act I am undertaking as a teacher. I am “drained; trying to balance encouragement with realism, trying to be firm, but not quash spirit” and “trying to protect myself” and yet be “open, approachable” (23 February 2016).

The diary entries above remind me of this anonymous comment made by a supervisor in Chandler’s (2011) survey:

“I believe because I regard myself as an ‘educator’ first, that I am more concerned with my students’ experience, process of, and understanding than a Principal engaged with trainees in a law firm would be and consequently more aware of the denigrating effect that non-constructive criticism can have” (p.97).

The need for constructive criticism in clinical legal education is a feature in the supervisory literature (see, for example, Barry, 1995; Lyman, 1995). My attempt to refrain from quashing my student’s spirit is a similar motif. As evidenced by my diary entry of 21 February 2016, I find it hard to understand “how people can fail to think about the students” because, to me, “what’s the point of doing the job if you don’t care about what happens to the students”. The ‘teacher’ in me is a key part of my supervisory role.

As a lawyer

Even though I left private practice in 2011, my diary entries show my role as a lawyer remains a powerful part of my experience as a supervisor. Alongside my concerns for my students I am also worried about the service I/the clinic provides to our clients, as this diary extract illustrates:

“So what sort of service am I/we giving the client. What will this client think of me? Do I push them away? I’m not going to pick up the phone and provide the advice. But if I don’t do that, they might become dissatisfied with the service. Our reputation will suffer. My reputation will suffer” (4 December 2015).

I appear to be particularly concerned about my own reputation as a solicitor. I worked in national law firms, and I trained under the some of the leading lights of the legal profession. As I note in the same diary entry, *“I’m a lawyer. I’m a good lawyer” (4 December 2015)*. I repeat this again on 13 January 2016: *“I’m proud that I’m a good lawyer”*. At one point, I talk directly to a student I am annoyed with, declaring *“it’s my practising certificate you work under” (11 November 2015)*. Anything a student does, be it good or ill, affects my professional standing. This is why I am pulled towards picking up the telephone and calling the client myself, and also why I note that I will have *“no hesitation”* to take the student away from working with real clients if *“I think I/the client/the clinic is compromised” (11 November 2015)*. I am troubled by the thought of my former colleagues in the legal profession *“laughing at me and my dumbed down legal advice, my failing students and my bad clinic” (13 January 2016)*.

As a colleague

In **Chapter 3**, I highlighted how clinical legal education research overlooks different facets of the supervisor-student relationship. Clinic students and staff working together as colleagues, for example, is an under-theorised issue.

I write directly about my collegial relationship with my students in this diary entry:

“Much like colleagues we are forced together. Much like colleagues I want us to “get on”. Like when you share an office with someone, you find a way of working together, you talk about personal

matters, you talk about work, you gossip and share and help each other to navigate the academic world” (11 November 2015).

We are forced together, my students and me. I have no idea who will be placed in my firms. The students may state a preference for a legal area, but even then they have no say over which supervisor they will get. Our Student Law Office administrator sends me and the students an email at the start of term, and only then can we all see our names. Yet we are still strangers. Over time, meeting each week in our group and talking inside and outside of the clinic, we get to know one another. We do talk about personal matters and we do share information. We even engage in gentle gossip, although I have had to absent myself from some conversations when matters have turned to, for example, other members of staff. Working together in close proximity, there is a sense that we are all in it together striving to furnish our clients with the right advice and get through the year unscathed.

As a mentor

As I explained in **Chapter 3**, one of my original codes was ‘investment in students’. This eventually evolved into ‘being a mentor’, although it took some time. At one point I wondered whether to refer to a “*maternal connection*” (11 November 2015), especially when I read extracts like this:

“Then I think about the student, trying to juggle life, other modules, family issues. I think about how I don’t know where they live. Did they have to travel far to come in? Are they unwell with all the bugs going around? I think about how I would feel if I were sat at home and received an email from my supervisor saying that things were happening on the case. I think about the students with disability statements. Will this urgency, this need to be flexible, impact on their health? Will they give up now before we’ve begun because the stress is too much?” (22 October 2015).

In one diary entry from 11 March 2016 I say I have emailed students after hearing a client had asked difficult questions, even though I was due to go a funeral, because “*all I could see was their little faces*” and all I could hear was “*them stressing to each other*”. When put together with the extract from 22 October 2015 above, these entries offer evidence that I feel a sense of responsibility towards my students that perhaps borders on indulgence and over-protection. There is some truth here. However, other diary entries indicate my role is more mentor than

mother. I am “*giving comfort and guidance*” but I still view my students as students; “*my bunch of 12. My firms*” (11 November 2015). They may “*drive me mad*” but they are “*still learning*” (11 November 2015). Ultimately, I “*see them through*” (13 January 2016) the year. As a mentor, I give career advice (23 February 2016) and we talk about training contracts and recruitment schemes (2 February 2016) as well as other educational and personal matters. My role goes beyond teaching the law.

All four: teacher, lawyer, colleague, and mentor

When I coded my data, I found evidence of four different roles. However, I could also see that the roles were not always separate; they sometimes converged.

On 11 November 2015, I refer to being both a teacher and a solicitor:

“As a teacher, I know that education is about making mistakes and moving on from that. I also know that you are a human being with a life outside of my one module. I do not want to make your life difficult. I only want to help. I do not want you to fail. I want you to succeed. Please succeed. As a solicitor, I just want the work to be done. I want to draft the document that you have been working on (or not) for 2 weeks and just get it out to the client” (emphasis in bold added).

Then, on 24 November 2015, after working for three hours on two documents for the same student I mention feeling “*stuck in between being someone’s mentor and their boss*”. I am frustrated at the poor quality of the work (“*it’s probably the poorest I’ve seen in 5 years*”) but I also do not want to “*crush*” or “*lose*” the student. I also need to be truthful and ensure the client receives a professional service. The conflict between different roles is apparent here, and also in an extract from 11 November 2015 where I speak of being “*stuck between two worlds*”; the patient, confidence building, jumper and jeans wearing educationalist shouting hard on one side, the client focused, reputationally aware suited and high heeled professional on the other.

In other extracts, I do not use terminology like ‘teacher’ or ‘mentor’, but the intersection of the different roles is clear to see. The extract below from 18 December 2015 is lengthy, but shows how I was cycling through the different roles, going from one to the other and then experiencing combinations of all four. For ease, I have highlighted each role/combination in bold square brackets:

“But I felt guilty that I hadn’t responded to students when they had emailed me work to thank them for that work. I’m also struggling to motivate myself to do my clinic work. It feels hard, heavy and a weight around my neck. I feel that it takes so long. I have to set aside time to do it otherwise I will miss something. I missed something on one case and now I’m having to put it right. If I had gone into the interview then I would have had the knowledge to answer the question the client asked [Lawyer]. But it took so long to get the students to a stage where they were even near the right answer to the central question, I didn’t work with them on the peripheral points that could come up [Teacher]. Of course, the client then naturally clung onto a peripheral point and now I’m having to go back into the advice letter and add this work in [Lawyer]. Then I feel guilty for not raising this with the student who has written the letter. I’m not trying to find the words to say ‘I missed this’ without saying I missed it but at the same time not make her feel that she’s done something wrong, although I’m also thinking ‘you should have’ (‘should have’ ‘could have’?) picked this up [Lawyer/Teacher/Colleague/Mentor]. Then I worry about the client. What sort of service are they getting? [Lawyer]...Sometimes I just want to put all of my experience, and the nuance, of advising into their heads [Lawyer/Teacher]”.

6.3.2 Theme 2: I am conflicted about prioritising my students’/clients’ needs

Of all my findings, the struggle whether to prioritise the needs of my students or my clients is the least surprising. As I outlined in **Chapter 3**, tension relating to a supervisor’s duty to their clients/students is a common feature in law clinic literature. I also know from experience, without needing to see it written down in my diary, that I regularly question if I am acting in a way that prejudices my clients in favour of my students (or vice versa).

Nevertheless, I was surprised to see that my questioning starts very early in the academic year. In my first diary entry on 7 October 2015, I query whether I should have been more directive and given my new students their first client enquiry form rather than work on a first come first served basis. I had six students in front of me, and yet only one enquiry. Typically, the students work in pairs and receive an enquiry per pair. As I note in my diary, one option was to give the enquiry to the entire firm. Business enquiries often include multiple, distinct points, and when this occurs I do tend to split the issues between different student pairs. However, each pair needs to obtain information and then give advice in a face to face interview. In my diary, I travel backwards and forwards between my concern for the client and the needs of my students. Would

the client want to come to the office for three separate interviews? Would it be fair if only one of the pairs had an opportunity to meet the client in the flesh and give advice face to face?

Reading through my diary entries (and the entry from 7 October 2015 in particular) I can see how I lean towards protecting my students and attempting to ensure equity between them, sometimes giving this more credence than the service to the client. Perhaps this is where I naturally sit. I remember feeling completely alienated when I read *A Teacher's Trouble* (Lerman, 1995) and sensed the strength of feeling against the student who had voiced his concern about being exposed to Tuberculosis. If I were in the same situation, I would probably advise the client myself. I would protect the student from harm, not suggest he “put those fears aside and get that petition signed” (Lerman, 1995, p. 322).

However, my thoughts are not exclusively with my students. As illustrated by my first theme, I still see myself as a legal professional. Take, for example, the diary entry I made 4 days after my first. A student had brought up the issue of the Winter Break, which (at the time I wrote my diary) occurred two weeks before Christmas and two weeks after New Year. During Winter Break students have no scheduled teaching sessions and are free to leave university. Our clinic, however, remains open. Our teaching is not scheduled and does not appear on a student's timetable. As far as the student is concerned, they can leave once their last timetabled session has finished. Some may even skip end of term lectures and seminars. Despite this, our legal work continues. There may be deadlines. The client may be in touch with new information. When a student asks me about the Winter Break, my priorities lie with the client:

“The Winter Break. Each year, students are told that their term ends on a certain date. This is usually two weeks before our office shuts for a few days. So what do you do when your students want to go home, or on holiday? The only question that came up in the firm meeting. That feeling of dread and inevitability that this is going to creep back up on you. And then the weekend email saying that they're going away before the break. Is that ok? Well, not really. A sickening feeling. An angry feeling. Is it taken seriously? Is the role – advising a real client – understood? What does it mean? What are you thinking?” (11 October 2015).

6.3.3 *Theme 3: Clinical supervision comes first*

As I set out in **Chapter 4**, my third theme is “clinical supervision comes first”. This is divided into three sub-themes: clinic comes before research, a constant stream of clinic work, and being on call.

Clinic comes before research

Given my diary is about my supervisory life, I am surprised at how much I mention research. At the start of this study, for example, I would not have imagined writing more in my diary about research than the conflict between student and client needs. In hindsight, I was wrong to discount the impact research has on my life as a supervisor. There has been a perceivable shift in traditional patterns of working in the law school (Mytton, 2003). Until recently, my law school had not entered the Research Excellence Framework. Now we are drafting mock submissions and impact assessments and asking all colleagues to complete forms ranking their publications. We have ‘REF-readiness’ lunchtime sessions. We have Research Mentors. These are excellent initiatives, but the important point is that none of this existed when I joined in 2011.

Struggling to do research at the same time as clinical supervision is mentioned in passing in the existing literature (Donnelly, 2015). In contrast, my diary includes repeated grumbles about my inability to take time away from the clinic to undertake research. At one point, I note how I am going to take each Friday as a research day (22 October 2015). Yet, two months later I am feeling “sick to my stomach” with client matters and dealing with this “all on a Friday when I am meant to be researching” (4 December 2015). Matters do not improve as the year goes on. On 26 February 2016, I wonder why I am “sitting here rewriting an interview plan when I’m meant to be on research leave”. The answer to that question is quite simple: clinical supervision comes first. I suspect the interview was due to take place in the next few days or the following week. As a lawyer, I needed to ensure the client received the correct advice. As a teacher, I needed to give the student feedback in enough time for them to take it on board and speak to me about any issues. I also needed to factor in time for the student(s) to come and see me and go through the main points of the interview before it occurred.

Writing an article is not a priority, compared to real legal advice. The difficulty for clinicians, however, is that publishing an article gets kudos within an academic institution. Spending all of

Friday rewriting an interview plan does not. On reflection, I am quite angry that I decided not to go to a conference because I felt *"I should be in the office dealing with client work"* (11 March 2016). As more clinicians engage in research, I wonder whether they too will start to voice their concerns that the demands of supervision do not marry with the 'headspace' required for meaningful scholarship. I am keen for supervisors to be part of the discourse on clinical legal education - to go to conferences, to edit books, to write articles, to give keynotes - but how are they meant to do this when I cannot even take one day to do research?

Constant stream of clinic work

Clinical supervision comes first due to the constant stream of clinic work. My diary shows there is no escaping it. I make several allusions to drowning in documents. They are *"flooding my inbox"* and *"I'm wading through"*, but still *"they arrive over and over again"* (25 January 2016). I am *"hugely overwhelmed"* (2 February 2016) by the amount of documentation I deal with on a daily basis with no end in sight. One morning, I note how I am dealing with multiple interviewing and letter writing assessments, lengthy advice letters, practical legal research reports, appointment letters, and update letters, and *"then meetings, more meetings"* (25 January 2016). Even reading this now is exhausting.

Being on call

Tied together with the constant stream of clinic work is a feeling of being 'on call'. This is best illustrated by diary entries from 24 November 2015 and 3 December 2015.

On 24 November 2015, I am:

"Running around, back and forward down the corridor. Trying to sort. Attempting to sort. Being an authority figure, a source of guidance. Eyes appealing to me: "what do we do next?" "what are the next steps?" "give us some reassurance" "make us feel calm and confident" "make it all okay". That's been my morning. Complete immersion in the clinic".

Again, reading this is exhausting. There is no sense of calm, or that I can walk away.

On 3 December 2015, I had decided to come into work later than usual. I had had some long weeks. I was tired. I arrived at 9.30am. However, this was a day when I knew students were meeting a client in the morning. Usually I would come in much earlier and be on hand for the students if they wanted to see me, or for the office administrators if something occurred (e.g. if the client got in touch and cancelled). On this particular morning, I decided that the students were prepared. I was also determined that I should be able to come to work at 9.30am if I so wished like any other member of teaching staff. I pushed on the revolving door, entered the warmth of the law school reception area, and saw my students looking unnerved but relieved to see me. The client had not turned up. They did not know what to do. This is what I did:

“Bag still in hand, coat still on I calmed them down and ran up the stairs to sort out rooms. I couldn’t even set up my computer properly – all morning it was one thing after another. Could the meeting be changed? When could the students do it? When could the client do it? Knock, knock. Knock, knock. Constant stream of students through my door all wanting a piece of me. I walked through the SLO. More meetings, more discussions. Constant stream of supervisory, calming, positive words. Is everyone ok? How are you feeling about it? Don’t worry. Don’t worry. Let’s think about next steps. This is what I’d like you to next. Don’t worry about it”.

Even when I had prepared my students, they still needed me. My guidance was important and I had to be present to agree the final decision. The students know they must get their supervisor’s approval for every course of action. I need to be available. Even taking half an hour away for myself can be an issue.

6.3.4 Theme 4: I frequently need to chase students to progress casework

In my diary, I regularly talk about the “constant need to push things on, to chase, to focus students’ minds on the reality of live client work” (22 October 2015). Despite being assessed on their legal work (and this forming a major part of their final grade), my students’ appreciation of the importance of moving the work forward does seem to be lacking: “I swear that if I wasn’t pushing them, they’d never get to the point where they got the client back in to advise them” (14 January 2016). I use the phrase “chasing” frequently: “I’m sick of chasing (14 January 2016), “I’ll chase another student for work that has not arrived (23 November 2015), “It’s been one thing after another today with the same theme: chasing students” (14 January 2016).

Why did so many of my students require frequent reminders to keep on top of their legal work? My diary does not provide any insight into the reasons, but I suspect that the difference between a clinical module and a traditional module is a factor. In our law school, the law clinic is the first time in four years where we ask students to be responsible for live legal work affecting a real person. Students have told me that this is a shock to the system.

My students can choose to engage to any extent they wish. The only consequence relates to their grade. I, on the other hand, am the solicitor responsible for the legal work. I cannot tune out or limit my engagement. The burden of responsibility is ever present and oppressive.

6.3.5 *Theme 5: Students have a significant impact on my ability to manage my workload*

We know that law clinic supervisors find it hard to balance their responsibilities (Lerman, 1995; Dunlap & Joy, 2004). Much less is written about the effect clinic students have on their supervisor's ability to manage their clinic workload. My diary entries reveal a direct correlation between the way my students worked and how I made plans. For example, on *11 March 2016* when I decided not to go to a conference, I did so because "*my students are so slow*" and I needed to be in the office so I could turn work around quickly when it eventually arrived.

I go into more detail in my diary entry from *26 February 2016*. I was rewriting an interview plan. In my diary, I ponder why I am doing this, and not just sending it back to the student to correct. I realise it is because it is a Friday, the interview is due to take place the next Wednesday, and I am not back in the office until Tuesday. The students know I am not back until Tuesday but they do not know "*my Tuesday is busy*". I do not "*want to spend time faffing on with an interview plan at speed [on Tuesday] just to get it back to them ready for Wednesday*". I have to calculate how I can fit the work into my working day. The length of time it takes for students to complete their work has an immediate effect on my arrangements.

6.3.6 *Theme 6: Supervision has an immediate impact on my emotional state*

When I started writing my diary, I had been working in the Student Law Office for nearly six years. I had an inkling my diary might detail the all-consuming nature of clinical supervision. I speculated, with some authority, that balancing client and student needs would crop up. I did not, however, have any idea that my diary would capture so much of the highly emotive nature

of my supervisory role. The extent of the impact of law clinic supervision on my emotional state is one of the most striking findings in this study.

The words and phrases describing my immediate emotional state are set out in **Figure 6.1**. The size of each word/phrase reflects the number of mentions in my diary. The colours represent core emotions (*neutral*, *somatic response*, *fear*, *anger*, *sadness*).

Figure 6.1 Words and phrases in my diary describing my emotional state at the time of writing

recurring headache [22 October 2015; 23 February 2016], *dread* [11 October 2015; 4 January 2016], *irritation* [11 October 2015], *sickening feeling* [4 December 2015], *gnawing away* [11 October 2015], *WORRY* [11 October 2015; 18 December 2015; 5 January 2016; 22 January 2016; 11 March 2016], *gnawing worry* [11 October 2015], *determined* [5 January 2016], *anger* [11 October 2015; 26 February 2016], *frustrated* [24 November 2015; 26 February 2016], *anxiety* [4 January 2016; 13 January 2016], *fear* [4 January 2016; 21 January 2016], *fuming* [4 November 2015], *furious* [11 November 2015], *panic* [4 November 2015], *overwhelmed* [2 February 2016], *gutted* [7 April 2016], *guilt* [18 December 2015; 13 January 2016; 26 February 2016; 12 April 2016]

When I meet colleagues at conferences, and when I talk to new members of staff, I say that I find clinic supervision frustrating at times. I do not use words like ‘gnawing worry’ (11 October 2015). My diary, however, illustrates the variety and voracity of feelings I experienced during a 7-month period of law clinic supervision.

Clinic supervision makes me angry. Yes, I am “frustrated” (24 November 2015; 26 February 2016), as I have often claimed. Yet, when I look at my anger responses in **Figure 6.1**, I see rage rather than the shoulder-shrug annoyance of mere frustration. My anger has power and force. I am “furious” (11 November 2015) and “fuming” (4 November 2015).

Anger is said to be the instinctive reaction to threat of harm. Am I feeling threatened when I supervise law clinic students? In the diary entry on 4 November 2015 where I talk about “fuming under the surface” I follow up by saying that “I have no control” and I am “dancing” to my students’ “tune”. My students have the power to make or break my working day. They can produce fantastic work, speak to the client with skill, and hit deadlines. Or, they can fail to turn up to meetings, breach confidentiality, and show little enthusiasm for advising our client. I can go home feeling on top of my cases, or spend the evening researching the law, mind-mapping strategies, and drafting documentation behind the scenes because I must be the backstop if the student does not produce adequate or timely work.

I am also full of fear. I experience “*dread*” (11 October 2015; 4 January 2016), “*anxiety*” (4 January 2016; 13 January 2016), and “*panic*” (4 November 2015). Above all, however, I am worried. My worry has a deep energy. It gnaws away at me throughout the year (11 October 2015; 18 December 2015; 5 January 2016; 22 January 2016; 11 March 2016). In October, I am worried we start the year without any clients. How will I give the students the experience they expect if we do not have any clients to advise? In December, we have clients and I am worried about the service they are receiving. I struggle to balance my clinic and non-clinic work, and I worry for my health. This continues into January, where I list the “*many*” (5 January 2016) clinic documents I must check and give feedback on. How am I going to get through them all in the time I have? In March, I worry about my students’ worrying.

I experience a somatic response to the stresses of clinic life. I suffer from recurring headaches (22 October 2015, 23 February 2016) and I also mention feeling sick (4 December 2015). On 22 October 2015, my headache lasts the entire day. The diary entry is hard for me to read. It feels relentless: “*the constant need to push things on, to chase, to focus the students’ minds on the reality of live client work*”. I am always thinking: “*I think about their assessment. I think about the client. I think about what other supervisors will think about me and my students [...] I think about the student [...] I think about the students with disability statements*”.

As I discussed in **Chapter 3**, there is a scarcity of research on emotions in the law school (let alone the law clinic). Law has traditionally viewed emotions as “the enemies of rationality and reason” (E. Jones, 2018, p. 450). As lawyers we are conditioned to remain calm, level-headed, and stable. As a law school employee and a practising lawyer I experience a dual constraint on speaking as I find, losing my cool, and demonstrating my feelings. My diary has, however,

captured and exposed feelings I have either forgotten or chosen to hide from public gaze. Unlike other studies into emotions and law clinic supervision, I can present evidence of an extensive variety of reactions. I provide a contemporaneous account of how I felt whilst supervising, rather than trying to recall emotions later.

E. Jones (2018) has challenged law schools to see emotion as a method of transforming legal education. To do this, I think we need to start by acknowledging our emotions often go beyond and are more complex than ‘frustration’. There is risk here. I fully expect some to read my diary entries and dismiss them (and me) as overly emotional. I may be labelled melodramatic. Yet, I hope by sharing my feelings I encourage conversations to take place. Law clinic supervision is not a neutral activity. The literature on the supervisory role must reflect the realities of the job.

6.3.7 Theme 7: Supervision has a lasting impact on my emotional state

In **Chapter 4**, I detail the evolution of my themes and sub-themes through mind maps. On 14 June 2016, I made what I now consider to be one of the most important changes. I divided the ‘emotional impact’ theme into immediate and residual impact. I remember having a ‘Eureka!’ moment when I finally worked out that thoughts and feelings linked to clinic supervision would stay “*in my head*” (11 October 2015; 11 November 2015) for many hours, even when I was engaged in (what should have been) relaxing activities. In an entry on 11 November 2015, I use the diary to write down an internal “*conversation*” I have had with a student “*for the past 6 hours*”. Supervision problems “*keep popping up*” when I am walking around town. I rhetorically ask “*why, a day later is this still here. Gnawing away*” (11 October 2015).

Sometimes emotions are fleeting experiences. I might have felt angry with the student asking about the Winter Break (11 October 2015) but I remember seeing that student soon after and being quite relaxed about it. I recall saying that I was sure they would get all their work done before they went away, because of course (with a glint in my eye) they wouldn’t ever be the sort of student to leave their important work until last minute. The anger was an instinctive, momentary reaction. I never went back to that issue again in my diary. Other feelings remained with me for longer. They got into my head. I worked through courses of action. I had pretend conversations with students, in readiness for the real thing.

My diary entries show how the emotional impact of supervision stayed with me, sometimes for days. This phenomenon is not properly reflected in the current literature on law clinic supervision. If we are going to start acknowledging the role emotions play in our supervisory practice, we must not fall into the trap of seeing feelings as impermanent episodes. From my diary I have been able to identify an extensive list of emotions and I am happy to have made that contribution. However, I would be disappointed if we continued to overlook the enduring impact of supervision on our mental health. More work is needed here.

6.4 My contribution to clinical legal education research

In this chapter so far, I have explored the themes and sub-themes I identified in my autoethnographic data. I have also situated my findings in the context of the existing literature on law clinic supervision. In this section, I reflect on the contribution this thesis has made to the field of clinical legal education.

In **Chapters 2 and 3**, I identified a paucity of autoethnographic research about clinical legal education. This thesis significantly extends my earlier attempts to introduce autoethnography as a research method and methodology to my law clinic colleagues (Campbell, 2016c, 2017a). We are at a stage in the evolution of clinical legal education research where we are, quite rightly, being challenged to make clear links to methodology. Hall (2015), for example, has repeatedly asked us to consider *how* we know what we know about clinic. We are already starting to see the fruits of her endeavours. In 2015, Mkwebu boldly stepped into the breach by producing the first systematic review of the clinical literature, breaking “new ground” (Hall, 2015) in clinical legal education. My concern is that clinicians will respond to Hall’s appeal by retreating, without question, to positivist approaches simply because they are known and given greater weight in research circles. Rather than run from our reflexive traditions, now is the time to embrace them and champion methodological innovation through contemporary methodologies like autoethnography.

Leaving aside methodological discussions, I am troubled by the limited number of personal stories relating to law clinic supervision. In **Chapter 3**, I speculate on the reasons for supervisor hesitancy in utilising lived experience in research. Whatever the rationale, however, this thesis illustrates that clinicians can use their own voice to speak about the complex and messy (Kilminster & Jolly, 2000) nature of supervision. I am proud to show that law clinic supervisors

do not need to shy away from their own experiences in order to be regarded as researchers. As the number of law clinics grow and diverge in purpose and structure, this thesis lays the groundwork for other stories to emerge and form part of our understanding of supervisory identity and practice.

Finally, I set out to offer fresh insight into the lived experience of an academic tasked with supervising law students providing legal advice to real clients. I have done this. My findings provide evidence of my separate and sometimes converging identities, reaffirmed existing knowledge of the challenges facing a supervisor throughout the academic year, and add depth and quality to a significantly limited body of literature on the emotional impact of law clinic supervision. My diary is available at **Appendix 1** and is a resource that can be used by researchers exploring aspects of law clinic supervision in the future.

6.5 Recommendations for supporting law clinic supervisors

I have discussed the themes and sub-themes I identified in my data and I have outlined my contributions to clinical legal education research. I now offer practical recommendations for the ongoing support of new and experienced supervisors. This final section on clinical legal education is aimed at law clinic directors, law school managers, and organisations tasked with promoting law clinic activity.

6.5.1 *Mentoring scheme for new clinicians*

New clinicians receive little preparation for the world they are due to inhabit (Macfarlane & McKeown, 2008). Supervisors, much like our clinic students, undergo an experiential education; they learn by doing. My findings show the supervisory experience to be complex, wearing, and anxiety-inducing. I am also conscious that I experienced many of the issues typically identified as affecting new supervisors (Dunlap & Joy, 2004; Macfarlane & McKeown, 2008). My findings show that seasoned supervisors, like myself, continue to encounter conflicting priorities, questions of identity, struggles with student motivation, and balancing multiple components of academic life. If this is how I am feeling, I wonder how new supervisors cope?

Under these circumstances, it would be easy for me to recommend an extensive induction and shadowing programme for law clinic supervisors new to the role. I am confident, however, that

law clinic directors know colleagues would benefit from such a scheme and would support it in principle. The reality is that clinics need their supervisors to hit the ground running as soon as possible.

I would be delighted to see all law clinics with in-house supervision allow their new supervisors a significant period to prepare for their role. In an ideal world, I would recommend a year-long shadowing scheme. This would allow new supervisors to see how their clinic colleagues deal with issues as they arise. They would also get a sense of, and be more prepared for, the complexities of the role.

Sadly, academia is not an ideal world. Rather than make an impractical recommendation, I would support the institution of a voluntary cross-university law clinic supervisor mentoring scheme putting experienced and new supervisors together. This could be co-ordinated through an establishment such as the Clinical Legal Education Organisation, for example.

6.5.2 *Emotional support and well-being for all clinicians*

Research on well-being in the law school has tended to concentrate on the student perspective, predominantly in Australia and the US where law students experience high rates of depression and anxiety (Krieger, 2002; Lester, England, & Antolak-Saper, 2011; Larcombe, Tumbaga, Malkin, & Nicholson, 2013). In contrast, the psychological well-being of law academics has received limited attention, especially in the UK. Happily, Wilson & Strevens' (2018) recent work has put the spotlight on the mental health of the teachers working within UK law schools. Their findings show that reported levels of depression, anxiety and stress are within the normal range. However, law academics with higher levels of depression, anxiety and stress were significantly more likely to experience an inability to live according to their values, feel powerless to influence events in their life, experience isolation, and lack self-acceptance. Contributing factors included increasingly heavy workloads, conflicting demands, and perceived inequities.

Wilson & Strevens' (2018) findings correlate with existing data on mental health in higher education generally. The decline of the university as a "community of scholars" (Harris, 2005, p. 424) and its reshaping as a corporate enterprise (Henkel, 2005) has led to ever-changing and increasing demands on institutions, students, and academics. Prompted by external assessment frameworks that encourage the fetishisation of competition (Naidoo, 2016), academics report an

increasing disconnect with institutional adoption of economic objectives (Billot, 2010) and a rise in mental health illness (Kinman & Wray, 2013; Bothwell, 2018). Given this backdrop, I understand why Wilson & Strevens (2018) have suggested law academics may continue to experience an increase in levels of psychological stress.

UK law clinics are not immune to the changes occurring in higher education. Perhaps influenced by economic objectives and the need to increase revenue, some clinics have decided to charge for their services (Campbell & Boothby, 2016). Others are moving out of the law school into prominent new buildings (Roper, 2018), seemingly separating clinicians from their law academic colleagues. With rising student numbers (Office of National Statistics, 2016) and a growing acceptance that experiential opportunities are a “necessity” (Marson, Wilson & Van Hoorebeek, 2005) in legal education, I often wonder how clinicians (both new and experienced) are going to cope with (diverging) institutional demands and the requirement to act in the best interests of their clients and their students.

I have no magic wand, and I am not an expert in mental health. I am therefore reluctant to make a formal recommendation. However, I would like to see greater emphasis placed on law clinic supervisor well-being. Peer support groups might be a way forward, or at least a way of starting conversations about emotional health.

I am also struck by the amount of evidence in my diary pointing to a conflict between supervising clinic work and research. If we want supervisors to be researchers - and I do - we need to give *meaningful* time away from the clinic environment to have space to think and write. I am the third clinician in my department to be given a semester-long sabbatical. I hope we three have shown others in the law school that it is possible to take a break from clinic work. I am optimistic that the number of sabbatical applications from our clinic colleagues will increase. I also hope that other universities (as well as my own) take note of the positive contribution clinicians can make to our field, when freed from the demands of the supervisory role.

6.6 Returning to the controversies surrounding autoethnographic research

In **Chapter 4** I examined the use of autoethnography as a method and methodology. In this section, I return to the controversies surrounding autoethnographic research and address the issues on which I am challenged the most.

6.6.1 *Does my diary contain the truth?*

The question of whether my diary, and this autoethnographic research, is ‘the truth’ deserves greater discussion than the scope of this thesis allows. However, I feel it is an important issue that needs addressing, albeit in an admittedly limited fashion.

In **Chapter 5**, I stated how I purposefully refrained from mentioning certain events and occurrences in my diary due to ethical concerns. I declined to write anything in my diary some days because I was fearful to put my inner thoughts in writing, potentially for all to see in this thesis.

Does omission condemn my diary as a false record? I do not believe so. Rather unsatisfactorily, however, I still worry I may have identified other themes in my autoethnographic data had I included some of the content I omitted, consciously or unconsciously. Nevertheless, I take heart from seeing experienced life writers wrestle with the same issue. Gore (2013), for example, asks:

“But surely we don't have to tell the whole truth, do we? Surely we can clean our stories up a little bit. Surely we don't have to confess all the shadowed and angry details. How about a goodly portion of the truth? That will be enough, won't it?” (p. 59).

I suspect my diary is indeed a goodly portion of the truth, and, perhaps, the portion that matters right now. The occurrences I consciously left out pertained to the politics of my law school, my university, and academia at large. Yet I did not embark on this study to gain a greater understanding of institutional machinations. If I had then maybe I would be questioning the efficacy of this study.

What about the diary entries I did write? Would my students see events in the same light? Might my colleagues take issue with my recollection of the situation? Haynes (2013) suggests we should not get hung up on the truth or falsity of our autoethnographic accounts, and instead focus on “the way in which our perceptions of reality are part of an interpretive process of understanding our experiences within the social world” (p. 382). I take her point. If we are looking for an objective account of reality (Medford, 2006) then I suspect we may be searching for some time. The content that appears in my diary is *my* truth, my way of interpreting reality (or at least it was at the time). Yet I would also argue that my diary entries contain more of my truth than any

other of my published works. Writing at the time, in the moment, allowed me to capture and re-access elusive emotions and concealed feelings (Rodriguez & Ryave, 2002). The diary is my hidden truth brought to the fore for all to see.

6.6.2 *Is this thesis scholarship?*

I discussed questions of validity in detail in **Chapter 4**. However, I feel compelled to return to this topic, not least because I have just experienced another bout of online negativity towards autoethnography. The latest tranche of comments is a consequence of the so-called ‘grievance studies hoax’ (Pluckrose, Lindsay, & Boghossian, 2018), where a group of researchers prepared spoof papers and targeted, for the most part, feminist and gender studies journals. According to the hoaxers seven of the 20 papers were accepted by the journals, although this figure has been the subject of some dispute (Phipps, 2018). The authors had a list of “very shoddy” (Pluckrose et al., 2018) methodologies. Autoethnography was on the list and described as “questionable” (Pluckrose et al., 2018). Two of the hoax papers specifically ‘used’ (and I say this advisedly) autoethnography to see whether “journals will publish utter nonsense” (Pluckrose et al., 2018) if packaged as autoethnographic. Neither paper was peer reviewed or published. In fact, they were rejected after initial editorial review.

One of the social media comments I received once the hoax was revealed simply told me that autoethnography was not scholarship. I did not reply. Sometimes I wonder if like Grant I need to ignore the “tired old positivist arguments” (Turner, Short, Grant, & Adams, 2017, p. 275). Tempting though this is, I do feel it is necessary to once again acknowledge and respond to criticism rallied against autoethnography, particularly in the context of the findings I discussed earlier in this chapter.

Above all, since writing about my findings I am even more convinced of the value of autoethnography. I review papers that make sweeping generalisations, lack depth, and generally take us no further forward, but get past editorial review and are unquestioningly accepted as scholarly (albeit needing revision) due to their use of sanctioned methodologies. This study, on the other hand, provides a deep insight into an underexamined phenomenon, but may be consigned to the reject pile simply because it is autoethnographic (Fox, 2013).

This study is the most rigorous piece of scholarship I have ever undertaken, and, I would argue, has shed light on several important issues pertaining to day to day practice in the law clinic, the manifestation of the supervisory role, and the emotional impact of supervision. I am not by any means arguing that all autoethnography is good scholarship. As with research generally, some are better than others. I am also not making the argument that autoethnography is superior to other research methods. Instead, I would like autoethnography to be treated with the same respect as ethnographic participant observation (Chang, 2008) and not simply written off as a questionable fad.

6.6.3 *Is this thesis self-indulgent narcissism?*

Autoethnography is frequently reproved as narcissistic self-love. Masturbation motifs thrive (Campbell, 2017a). Some critics have also taken to using the pejorative term ‘me-search’, conjuring up the image of the autoethnographer “lying feverishly back on a chaise longue, pen in one hand, the other laid on [their] forehead, overcome with the toil of narcissism” (Campbell, 2017a, paragraph 36).

Is this thesis simply a manifestation of my own ego? I have reflected on this question at length. Have I chosen autoethnography because it is an opportunity to be centre-stage? Am I basking in the warm glow of the spotlight? I hope not. I have attempted to do more than tell a story with little thought to anything other than myself. Instead, I have championed deep and complex reflection with links to socio-cultural contexts to advance our understanding of the hidden world of law clinic supervision. I am painfully aware that many, if not all, of my diary entries paint me in a rather unpleasant light. I am not sure I would ever choose to portray myself in this manner.

Ultimately, I am inclined to agree with Sparkes’ (2018) when he warns that labelling all autobiographical ethnography as self-indulgent is “a dangerous and threatening move” (p.213). I am sure that some researchers are self-absorbed, but that does not necessarily take away from the value of their work. Dismissing autoethnography as the “selfie” (Campbell, 2017a, paragraph 36) of the research world is a disappointingly one-dimensional reaction that de-values all reflective scholarship.

6.6.4 *Why do my diary entries focus primarily on negative experiences?*

Law clinic supervisor Matilda Smith says she experiences joy every day with her students (Chandler, 2011). Joy was not one of my themes. It was not even on my list of emotions. My diary overwhelmingly focuses on negative experiences and feelings.

I once showed parts of my diary to doctoral students in a session I was co-facilitating. One of the students asked if I was concerned about concentrating so much on the bad and almost completely leaving out the good. I suspect others might ask the same question, and I have certainly contemplated it myself. In terms of my response, I go back to the idea of autoethnography as sensemaking (Vickers, 2007). I wrote when I felt compelled to write. I felt compelled to write when something was troubling me, when I was trying to work through events, questions, and feelings, and when I was trying to capture what was going on and what it meant to me.

I have many, many positive experiences throughout the academic year. I do not need to make sense of the joyous moments in my working life, but I am prompted to interrogate and understand what happens when things go wrong.

6.6.5 *Is this thesis atheoretical?*

In truth, it has taken me some time to develop an appreciative understanding of my position on theory and this thesis. At first, I struggled to understand why I needed to mention theory at all. As I discussed in **Chapter 4**, I am not looking to build a generalisable theoretical proposition. I am not trying to test theory. So, is this thesis atheoretical?

In short: no.

I have, throughout the thesis itself and through my diary entries, shared a story. I have invited readers to respond to the story with their own stories. And, importantly, I have also moved to finding themes. I turned from “thinking *with* to thinking *about* stories” (*original emphasis*, Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 130). I have done this overtly, via thematic analysis, but I have also introduced theoretical questions through the narrative I have weaved into this thesis. My diary entries and this thesis extend conversations pertaining to struggles in an academia; struggle to

balance, to find one's place, to better understand relationships, and to decide how much vulnerability is too much. As Ellis notes, "Amazing how theoretical a story can be, isn't it?" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 131).

6.7 My contribution to autoethnography

In terms of an overarching contribution to autoethnography, this thesis adds to the growing body of academic autoethnographic research. Specifically, it is the first autoethnographic investigation of (clinical) legal education. I put clinical in brackets here because legal education generally has yet to discover autoethnography and I would make the claim that this thesis is, at least, one of the first examples of autoethnographic research conducted by a law teacher.

In terms of smaller, more contained contributions, I have added my own perspective to debates on literature searching (**Chapter 2**) and genres of autoethnography (**Chapter 4**). I have probed both issues through the lens of a female practising solicitor who is employed on a full-time academic contract. I have argued that an abductive approach to literature searching makes sense in an autoethnographic context given the focus on interpretation, but the content capture system I created and used alongside it also accords with my legal practice background. My blog post (Campbell, 2016d) detailing this 'systematically creative' technique has already had an impact on other academics. I receive many personal communications about the blog post and it continues to be shared widely on social media.

I am less vocal about the discord I experience when considering whether to privilege one genre of autoethnography over the other. I see other autoethnographers nailing their colours to the mast and labelling their research (seemingly without hesitation) as evocative, analytic or moderate. I hope the discussion at the start of **Chapter 4** provides some comfort to autoethnographers who, like me, find themselves conflicted, particularly if they too hold an unspoken desire not to displease the autoethnographic researchers we admire and who gave us entry into autoethnography.

My next two contributions relate to method. When I speak about autoethnography to my colleagues, I often receive responses along the lines of '*yes, that's all very well and good, but how do you actually do it?!*'. **Chapter 4** should prove a useful and accessible guide for researchers interested in the various ways you can 'do' autoethnography. Specifically, I have shown, in some

detail, how to use (a) a reflexive diary to capture autoethnographic data, and (b) thematic analysis to consider diary content.

I do not think that reflexive diaries or thematic analysis (either separately or together) represent the only way of doing autoethnography. On the contrary, I am very interested in exploring other means of recording, analysing, and performing lived experience. However, as I discussed in **Chapter 4**, for this study I wanted a method that allowed me to externalise my inner dialogue as I went about my working day. The lawyer within me liked the simple structure of a diary. I wanted an analytical tool kit. The lawyer within me was drawn to Braun & Clarke's (2006) no-nonsense approach to thematic analysis, which, whilst systematic, still embraced reflexivity. The problem with the existing autoethnographic literature is that neither of these methods are covered in any meaningful detail. For those who, like me, were looking for a transparent, step by step guide to using a reflexive diary and thematic analysis in autoethnography I hope this thesis shines a light on two effective but under-examined approaches.

Finally, this thesis has provided a deeper insight into the ethical dilemmas I faced as an autoethnographer. Unlike many of my doctoral peers, I dedicated an entire chapter to autoethnographic ethics (**Chapter 5**). Whilst **Chapter 5** covers many ethical issues, I am particularly proud of the contribution it makes to our understanding of the potential dangers of writing autoethnographically and reading autoethnographic material. As I write this, I am reminded of the balletic Child Catcher from the film *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, luring his unsuspecting victims with promises of "Lollipops! Ice cream! Chocolate! And all free today!" (Hughes & Broccoli, 1968). I suspect I have done the same. I have often extolled the virtues of autoethnography, cooing wondrously at its power and encouraging others to dip their toe. But autoethnography is not "soft and fluffy" (Wall, 2006, p. 147). At times, I found it to be harrowing and detrimental to my mental health. I hope **Chapter 5** puts other doctoral students and supervisors on notice of the hidden adverse effects of autoethnographic research and practice.

6.8 Concluding comments

In this chapter I have discussed the themes and sub-themes in my autoethnographic data. I have returned to the literature on law clinic supervision and explored the similarities and differences with my findings. From this, I have been able to make claims as to my contributions to clinical legal education research and provide practical recommendations relating to the support and

well-being of law clinic supervisors. I have also explored, in greater depth and in the context of my findings, the controversies surrounding autoethnographic research. I brought the chapter to a close by explaining the contributions I feel I have made to autoethnography as a method and methodology.

In my next, and concluding, chapter I turn to the limitations of this research, suggest areas for further research, and finish with my personal reflections on the process of writing this thesis.

Chapter 7 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

7.1 Introduction

This short chapter comprises my concluding remarks. First, I acknowledge the limitations of this study and make suggestions for future research. Secondly, I finish with my personal reflections on the process of conducting this research and writing this thesis.

7.2 Limitations of this study and areas for future research

7.2.1 *Using diaries in autoethnographic research*

I will always wonder whether I wrote enough in my diary. I look at **Figure 4.4** in **Chapter 4** and I am drawn to the passages of time where I recorded nothing. What did I miss? And would this 'missing material' have had any effect on my findings anyway?

My diary was not written with a specific purpose in mind other than to capture my experiences as a supervisor. Perhaps if I had imposed an exact plan - to diarise each day at the same time, for example - I would be less inclined to mull over what I may have left out. Perhaps if I had set explicit goals - to capture the good as well as the bad - I would have had more to say.

I can look at the open nature of my diary writing as a limitation. Or, this could be its greatest strength. My entries are authentic accounts of experiences, feelings, and thoughts I felt compelled to write down and make sense of. They arrived spontaneously and instinctively, unaffected by forced routine or convention. Ultimately, I am happy with the approach I took. Once again, without really thinking about it, I was systematic (fastidiously recording my diary on an electronic document) but creative (writing when I felt the urge to do so).

Other autoethnographers may prefer a fixed schedule for their diary writing. The key point here, however, is that there is such limited guidance on keeping a diary or journal for the purposes of autoethnography it is difficult to know what to do. I hope that the detailed explanation as to how I managed my diary in **Chapter 4** goes some way to closing a significant gap in our knowledge of autoethnographic diaries. Above all, though, I would like other autoethnographers

to explore and critique my approach I chose, and write about alternative choices. Considerably more work needs to be done to determine the advantages and limitations of contrasting techniques in diary writing.

7.2.2 Time recording data

In my original research proposal (**Appendix 7**), I said that I wanted to record the time I spent on clinic supervision. I already had a large academic diary and, rather than using it to map out what I was going to do, I had got into the habit of recording exactly what I did each day. I took the diary with me to meetings, into the Student Law Office, and it sat open on my desk throughout the working week.

Each day was represented by a column. The column was divided into half hours, starting from 6am and ending at 10.30pm. I found it relatively easy to draw a line closest to the nearest half hour when I started a task and then draw another line when I had finished. Soon each column was split into square blocks, each representing a different activity. I created a colour code for each activity and marked the squares using coloured pens. Please see **Figure 7.1** for a photograph of my time recording diary week commencing 9 November 2015.

I continued to time record throughout the 2015/2016 academic year, alongside my narrative diary. I had ethical approval to use the data as part of this study.

9-11-15

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5 TLA OFFICE

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- LAD 729

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The feedback on my proposal was very encouraging, but the panel were concerned that I was giving myself too much to do. Specifically, they queried whether there was sufficient time - in the framework of a part-time Professional Doctorate - to answer all of the questions I originally posed. The panel were, naturally, correct. I did not have the space to include a full analysis of the time recording data. In addition, as I began to plan out this thesis and converse with my supervisors I found that all my focus was on the analysis of the narrative diary and the rewards and limitations of autoethnographic writing. The time recording data seemed to sit outside of the thesis, like a side project. With this in mind, I decided to retain my focus on my narrative

diary. Accordingly, I will explore my time recording data in a post-Professional Doctorate study where I can give it the attention it deserves.

7.2.3 *Exploring emotions in legal education*

Whilst Clarke & Braun (2018) may frown at me saying this, the emotional aspects of my study really did seem to emerge from my data. I had very little idea how emotionally fraught my diary entries would be, nor was I aware of the lasting impact supervision had on my state of mind and well-being. Out of all my findings, the themes relating to emotion have stayed with me the most. This study certainly adds to very limited literature on emotions in legal education, especially from a teacher perspective. Yet, I am conscious that what I have written in this thesis is very much a starting point.

Emma Jones recently visited our Law School to speak about her work on emotion and legal education. Together we concluded there was a dearth of research into the “messy and complicated tapestry of emotions” (E. Jones, 2018, p. 453) experienced by law teachers. Emma makes the case for greater acknowledgment of emotions across the law school, but she explicitly points to the emotional experiences of clinical legal education as offering potential for further study (E. Jones, 2018). A natural progression of my work would be to consider my emotional findings in greater depth and develop the arguments I introduced in **Chapter 6**.

7.2.4 *One story, one context, one period of time*

This study has focused on my experience as a supervisor at the Northumbria Law School Student Law Office during the 2015/16 academic year. This deep and targeted self-reflection has led to a nuanced account revealing epiphanies about my cultural identity (Ellis et al., 2011) as a law clinic supervisor. I have also done research that, I would argue, is “meaningful for me and for other people” (Ellis & Bochner, 2014). It is also, however, one story. As I discussed in **Chapter 4**, I am not trying to create generalisable findings, but I do acknowledge that my data relates to one supervisor, at one clinic, over a certain period of time. I would encourage other law clinic supervisors working in or with law clinics across the world to use autoethnography and their personal experience to describe *their* cultural beliefs and practices. There is an opportunity to contribute to a deeper understanding of law clinic supervisory practice, how supervision

emotionally affects the supervisor, and the changing culture of law school identity through autoethnographic dialogues.

7.3 Personal reflections

I was accepted onto the Professional Doctorate in Law (DLaw) programme in September 2015. In the 38 months that followed, I read and reviewed literature, collected and analysed data, and wrote this thesis. It sounds simple. And yet, my doctoral experience was just as complex and messy as the reality of law clinic supervision I sought to capture in this research.

On a personal level, there have been incredibly difficult times. In September 2016, I was diagnosed with a rather hideous bout of clinical depression and anxiety. I was on sick leave for three months and was only able to return to work in stages, taking two or three days at a time, for months after. I consigned this doctorate to the space under our spare bed. I pushed all the lever arch files containing the autoethnography I loved far away from view. I did not think I would return to this work ever again.

I often wonder what inspired me to pick up the baton and run again. There were certainly no aggressive demands from my institution. No angry letters. No disappointed faces, urging me to 'get on with it'. If I were to hazard a guess, I suspect the reason I started, quietly and gently, to read a few papers and to write a few lines in March 2017 was because I was, and remain, intensely interested in the story of law clinic supervision. I have written about a variety of issues over the years, from creativity in the curriculum to clinic regulation. I have been a high-flying corporate lawyer, doing 24-hour shifts whilst big businesses merged and millions of pounds were exchanged. Yet the passion I feel for autoethnographic research into clinical legal education surpasses anything I have ever experienced in my career. There is something that comes alive in me when I am asked to defend the subjective lens of autoethnography, or to explain why personal stories in clinic are important, or to analyse the ethical dilemma(s) of writing about your own life.

What am I most proud of? In this thesis, I have challenged the notion that clinicians should not speak with their own voice. This is perhaps my proudest achievement. As clinical legal education enters a new phase of its research journey, I am glad this thesis exists to remind myself and anyone who reads this work that positivism, and the pursuit of an objective, detached stance, is

not the only path. I do not see self-reflexive methodologies as superior to any other research paradigm. However, I do defend my right to explore them, to use them, and to call myself a researcher.

What am I most afraid of? I sometimes struggle with my inner thoughts and feelings being published for anyone to access. Despite my desire to see greater exploration of the reality of academic life, I worry I cannot take the words back. My hidden self is exposed and I have no control over how people view me. I may always be the woman who felt gnawing worry, or who got sick of chasing students. A snapshot in time now exists. Even though my life will inevitably change, this version of me will endure. But then, in moments of reflection, I turn to myself and say “to danger in writing; autoethnography is a dangerous woman writing” (Mackinlay, 2015, p. 199). And I take a deep breath. And I am ready to put my autoethnography into the world.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Cleaned version of my diary (7 October 2015 – 12 April 2016)

Appendix 2 Cleaned version of my diary with original codes dated 31 May 2017

Appendix 3 Extracts from my diary mapped against relevant themes/sub-themes

Appendix 4 Original Ethical Issues Form

Appendix 5 Updated Ethical Issues Form

Appendix 6 Ethical approval

Appendix 7 DLaw proposal

Appendix 8 A selection of my published autoethnographic works

Appendix 1

Cleaned version of my diary (7 October 2015 – 12 April 2016)

7 October 15 (after first firm meeting)

Kicking myself for a rubbish firm meeting. Have so many teaching ideas and then I just do a sit and chat. Tomorrow's meeting will be so much better but is that fair to the students today? And what do I do with them next week? Why didn't I just do what I wanted to do? Because I didn't have a board marker? Because it was easier? Probably because I had been so held up and not prepared at all, even though I was prepared 2 weeks ago. Feel like a bad teacher.

If I had given the enquiry out – would that have enthused them more? Now I am stuck with a first come first served system. I could have given the enquiry out and then spread out the work between the firm. But then would a client want to come in for three different advice interviews. Or would it be fair to the ones who did get an advice interview and those who didn't? I long for the days when we had enquiries for everyone – and I had more students then! We do more marketing, more media – why do we have so few enquiries?

11 October 15

The Winter Break. Each year, students are told that their term ends on a certain date. This is usually two weeks before our office shuts for a few days. So what do you do when your students want to go home, or on holiday? The only question that came up in the firm meeting. That feeling of dread and inevitability that this is going to creep back up on you. And then the weekend email saying that they're going away before the break. Is that ok? Well, not really. A sickening feeling. An angry feeling. Is it taken seriously? Is the role – advising a real client – understood? What does it mean? What are you thinking? Then the calm. Why am I getting upset about this? Why does this keep popping up in my head in moments of silence when walking around town. Why, a day later is this still there. Gnawing away. I think of the stress if the client wants or needs to come in for advice during the weeks they are away. I think of my role – responsibility to the client, responsibility to the student. I think of the student. Other things in their life. Family commitments. I think of what I'm going to say. "Well, I can't make

you be a university but... but it might affect your assessment (ominous, threatening), but it might affect you being able to advise the client..., but we don't know what's going to happen and what will you do if the client needs to be advised that week?" But then we don't even have any clients yet. So it's just worry. Gnawing worry. What would others do? Some would be strict and say it like it is – you're here to do a module, you have a responsibility. I don't want to do that. Because what happens if the work is done and it makes no difference? My biggest concern is that the cases aren't here and we don't get things moving along and then everything is delayed. Gnawing worry and irritation.

22 October 15

An entire, headache inducing day of supervision. There were highs and lows. The high was the enthusiasm with which my students came bounding into my room post-interview. I was able to ask lots of questions and help them come to a strategy for moving forward. What I loved the most was the way that they talked about their firm being close and all wanting to help each other. They pointed out team members who they thought their work could help. They wanted to help the client. They wanted to help their team. Then the low is the constant need to push things on, to chase, to focus students' minds on the reality of live client work. Is it okay not to come in to the office? On the one hand, how is a student meant to know that something will kick off? We can't expect them to sit in the office all day, waiting, or even in uni all day, on the off chance that 'something' will happen? But what if something does happen? What if we need to move things along at speed? What if things are moving along at speed and they're not there? Is it okay to ask those students to come in to the office? This is my struggle. I want them to come in. To deal with it. I think about the lecture they have at the beginning of the year that says they should be aiming for 10-15 hours. I think of the whole point of experiential education. I think about their assessment. I think about the client. I think about what other supervisors will think about me and my students – how my students' lack of engagement reflects negatively on me. Then I think about the student, trying to juggle life, other modules, family issues. I think about how I don't know where they live. Did they have to travel far to come in? Are they unwell with all the bugs going around? I think about how I would feel if I were sat at home and received an email from my supervisor saying that things were happening on the case. I think about the students with disability statements. Will this urgency, this need to be flexible, impact on their health? Will they give up now before we've begun because the stress is too much? I walk around town for half an hour and when I return to my desk it's late afternoon and nothing has happened. Eventually things get sorted - a

student comes in. But then I'm the one sitting in my office at 5.30pm with a bad back and headache, feeling like I've been from one thing to another constantly 'runaway train-ing'. I love my job. I hate my job.

The struggle to balance supervision with research: I want to take Fridays to do research. My students know I'm not available on Fridays. But now a client is coming in in 2 days and I am panicked. Will my students be able to turn the plan around in time. If I get it on Monday when am I going to look at it? I'm already scheduling work over the weekend to make space on Monday for this. But then they might not get it to me by Monday. Tuesday is hell, one meeting after another, and a late night when I'm taking students to an event. I haven't even started looking at my conference paper for next week. I want to cry as this was my dream – to get into the AE conference. I'm struck by how little my teaching made to my promotion application and my research was a whole section.

4 November 2015

Fuming. The movement from fume to not so fume. But still fuming beneath the surface and sense of panic and having no control over your own time management.

What do you do when someone is working on a completely different timescale to your own? It has been a week since I asked for a document to be sent out. It has not been sent out. It has remained in the inbox, not doing anything. I raced to check that email and return feedback before I left to go to my conference. I did that because I want to be a good supervisor. I don't want to leave students hanging, waiting for me to help them progress their work. I felt good that I had worked hard to get the feedback back to them. They could then send it out. But it remained in the inbox. And when I have asked why it hasn't been sent out, I am met with confusion – "well, we thought you wouldn't be able to look at it until you came back from the conference" "well, you said it didn't need to go out until next Thursday". But I said in the email "here you go, please send it out". Is there any way I can be clearer? I want to be petulant and say how I worked really hard to get that document back to them so that they could move on, so I was a good supervisor. But it sounds childish. So I don't say it. I say that I'm concerned for them. I want them to do well. And they can't do well if the case isn't progressing. They leave and I am still fuming under the surface. I have no control. I am dancing to their tune. Should I have gone to the conference and done the work when I got back? Would they have cared? Noticed? Now we are all not very happy with each other.

11 November 2015

A breach.

What possessed you to do it? Why did you think it was okay to breach procedures like this? We've gone through the need for confidentiality, the policies, the procedures, the rules. We've talked about why those rules are important. We wouldn't put in place things like separate accounts, swipe cards etc if it wasn't something important. Why have you done this?

Why don't you seem to care? Is it me – am I too not 'scary' enough? Did I, in some way, give signs that it wouldn't be a bother if you didn't do things the right way. Should I have taken you to task a few weeks ago when I suspected that you were not pulling your weight, and that others through their deeds and words were suggesting that they were annoyed by this? I wanted to give you time to bed in, and to prove that you could pull it together. Maybe you just needed time. Maybe when things got going, it would bring it to life and the immediacy of giving real legal advice to real people would sink in.

I have had this conversation with you for the past 6 hours. Over and over in my head I go through what I'm going to say and how I'm going to say it. I want to impress how serious a breach of procedure is. It's threefold. It affects me as it's my practising certificate you work under. I am responsible for your actions. It affects the client. You have breached our policies – what would that client think about you and the SLO? And it affects you. Because this is part of your assessment. It will inevitably affect your grade. And I want to say that I will have no hesitation to take you away from live clients if I think I/the client/the clinic is compromised.

Why did you do it? What is happening behind the scenes? Why could you not come in the office, which is open 9-5 every day? Is there something wrong? So I am torn. I want to be furious. I am furious. As a professional I want you to pull your socks up, acknowledge the seriousness of your actions and show some maturity and professionalism. As a teacher, I know that education is about making mistakes and moving on from that. I also know that you are a human being with a life outside of my one module. I do not want to make your life difficult. I only want to help. I do not want you to fail. I want you to succeed. Please succeed. As a solicitor, I just want the work to be done. I want to draft the document that you have been working on (or not) for 2 weeks and just get it out to the client. As a researcher, I sigh thinking about all of the time that I have spent this afternoon – the Weds afternoon I keep free, where I am not available –

dealing with this, and other panicking students, and client emails and practical legal research reports. I don't resent it. I could have turned off my email and thought about all of that another day. But the research comes last. Providing a service to the students and the clients is always there.

I query whether I have bonded with my students. This is the first year that I don't really feel that connection. It may be because we have been together for such a short period of time. I'm sure that it's been like this in previous years but I don't remember meetings being this painful. One group in particular are quiet and there are big personalities in that group. It's interesting to think about why this connection or bond is so important to me. Much like colleagues we are forced together. Much like colleagues I want us to "get on". Like when you share an office with someone, you find a way of working together, you talk about personal matters, you talk about work, you gossip and share and help each other to navigate the academic world. Is this what clinic replicates? Or is it a maternal connection? These are my students. My bunch of 12. My firms. I want them to do well. I want them to succeed. They drive me mad, but I can see the person behind the student and they're not bad people. They're just learning. And I know that at the end of the year I want them to look back at this as the best experience they've had. I do it for them.

23 November 2015

I want to do clinic work all day. I want to down tools and start going through my table of clinic work and see what is to be done and when. But that's not what my workload says I should be doing. Really, I should be finishing my PhD Proposal, sorting out research administration, asking to be a reviewer of another journal, completing an application for an award, updating the eLP, writing that article on autoethnography. But I'm not. Today, I'm going to review three legal documents (website terms of use, privacy policy and cookie policy). I'm going to have a meeting with my students to explore each of those documents, give guidance on the structure and content of their interview advising the client on that document, give reassurance that everything is going well and take a peek into the future and plan out a strategy for what happens if this or that occurs. I'm also going to review and give feedback on an 8 page legal research report and organise a meeting to discuss that document and what lies ahead. I'll chase another student for work that has not arrived by the deadline. I'll review and

give feedback on a letter. I'll review and give feedback on another letter. And, I'll fit in some of the other things that my workload says that I should be doing as and when I can. I'll also deal with students popping in and seeing me throughout the course of the day, or stopping me in the office.

24 November 2015

Running around, back and forward down the corridor. Trying to sort. Attempting to sort. Being an authority figure, a source of guidance. Eyes appealing to me: "what do we do next?" "what are the next steps?" "give us some reassurance" "make us feel calm and confident" "make it all okay". That's been my morning. Complete immersion in the clinic.

Three hours on two documents for the same student. I'm so frustrated but yet trying to find supportive words. The work is poor. It's probably the poorest I've seen in 5 years. I have spent three hours reviewing and providing feedback. I've read the feedback out to a colleague to check it's balanced. I don't want to crush the student, but I also want to make them aware that the work is poor. Partly because I want to protect myself if I end up giving a poor mark. Partly because it has to be said and I wonder about the quality of our graduates. I think about my time as a student – would have been dedicated to SLO? Would I have produced work of this quality? I don't want to 'lose' this student. I have to work with them for the rest of the year. And they're not 'bad'. But I have to tell the truth. On a day like this I feel that I'm stuck in between being someone's mentor and their boss.

26 November 2015

I get to my desk at 9am. I start reading about theoretical perspectives. I want to update the DLaw group with book & article recommendations. But the list of clinic documents is piling up. Letters, research reports, interview plans. The pull of this work is too much. I feel this must be where my attentions lie. Although my brain tells me that this work is meaningless to my career. My role as a clinical supervisor will be one line in my CV, in any promotions criteria. No-one will care that I sat for three hours looking at two documents for the same student. No-one will care about the time that I took to find the right, most supportive, most balanced words. Career-wise it makes much more sense to concentrate on 'research' focussed tasks. I swallow that down and get on with listing the clinic work to be done this morning. I can't let the students down.

3 December 2015

Today I am a bad supervisor. I wanted to come in a little later than usual. I wanted a bit of a rest, especially as I knew I would be working late tonight. I wandered through the revolving doors at 9.30am. I saw my students. They shouldn't have been there. Their client was late. There wouldn't be any free rooms left if she didn't turn up soon. Bag still in hand, coat still on I calmed them down and ran up the stairs to sort out rooms. I couldn't even set up my computer properly – all morning it was one thing after another. Could the meeting be changed? When could the students do it? When could the client do it? Knock, knock. Knock, knock. Constant stream of students through my door all wanting a piece of me. I walked through the SLO. More meetings, more discussions. Constant stream of supervisory, calming, positive words. Is everyone ok? How are you feeling about it? Don't worry. Don't worry. Let's think about next steps. This is what I'd like you to next. Don't worry about it.

Knock, knock. Knock, knock. Torn in so many different directions. I need to do this form. I want to do this form. I can't do this form because all I have is knock, knock. Knock, knock. And it's important. It's client work. It needs to be done. The students need support. The client needs their advice. I need a rest. Please can I just have an hour where I can sit quietly and think.

4 December 2015

Why do I drop everything to come to a student's aid? Here I am, working from home, huge list of admin and research to do. But I check my email and see two worried emails from students following a client interview and I drop everything to write an email to both giving comfort and guidance. I tried to carry out with what I was doing. But all I could see was their little faces. I could hear them stressing to each other. It's like an itch you have to scratch. Part of me thought about ringing the office and speaking to them, to make them feel better. What on earth?!

Ever felt sick to your stomach? I get a wave of sickness in my stomach when students email about client queries. I know that the best thing for the client is for me to pick up the phone and give them the advice. I can answer those points quickly and easily. But my students can't. They need time. What if the client doesn't appear to realise that? What if they see them as a free service where they can keep asking and asking? I'm stuck between two worlds. I'm a lawyer. I'm a good lawyer. And I can tell the client what they need to know within minutes. But I also have to protect the students. They don't know the answers. They

need time to find the answers and then relay them. This can take weeks. So what sort of service am I/we giving the client. What will this client think of me? Do I push them away? I'm not going to pick up the phone and provide the advice. But if I don't do that, they might become dissatisfied with the service. Our reputation will suffer. My reputation will suffer. All of this on a Friday, when I'm meant to be researching. And I still feel sick.

18 December 2015

I'm a little disturbed by the long time periods between journal entries. I've had so many moments since 4 December where I kept thinking 'I must write this down, I must write this down'. But then I don't. I'm distracted. I prioritise other things. Last night, I had loads to say after finishing the DLaw taught sessions but I just didn't sit down and write. Because I was busy writing the PhD Proposal and I somehow prioritised that. Even though this is part of the PhD.

Is it okay to write after the event? Is one day okay? Is it okay to think back further?

Thinking back to yesterday, I wanted my entry to say that I'd spent three whole days doing no substantive clinic work. I looked at emails as they came and noted that things needed doing, but it wasn't until I received an email about a problem sending a letter out that I actually physically did something. I feel very conflicted about how much I enjoy time away from the clinic. I loved the three days talking about doing the PhD. I loved talking about autoethnography and what it means to me. I loved thinking of answers to difficult questions. I loved the sense of community we have established in the DLaw group. But I felt guilty that I hadn't responded to students when they had emailed me work to thank them for that work. I'm also struggling to motivate myself to do my clinic work. It feels hard, heavy and a weight around my neck. I feel that it takes so long. I have to set aside time to do it otherwise I will miss something. I missed something on one case and now I'm having to put it right. If I had gone into the interview then I would have had the knowledge to answer the question the client asked. But it took so long to get the students to a stage where they were even near the right answer to the central question, I didn't work with them on the peripheral points that could come up. Of course, the client then naturally clung onto a peripheral point and now I'm having to go back into the advice letter and add this work in. Then I feel guilty for not raising this with the student who has written the letter. I'm not trying to find the words to say 'I missed this' without saying I missed it but at the same time not make her feel that she's done something wrong, although I'm also thinking 'you should have' ('should have' 'could have'?) picked this up. Then I worry about the client. What sort of service are they getting? Then I worry about me. How many times will I need to see this letter before it can go out?

I will spend hours on that first draft letter. I will amend it and add comments. Then I will complete a form for LPC assessment to say whether it is competent or not. Then the student will amend it. Then I will look at it again and give more feedback. I will probably need to change it. Sometimes I just want to put all of my experience, and the nuance, of advising into their heads. I wonder where all of my experience comes from. Who gave it to me? How did they do it? I'm thinking back to all of the partners I've worked with. Am I just an amalgamation of them? I can't remember specific things they 'taught' me to do.

4 January 2016

For the first time, I don't want to do clinic work. I feel torn apart. I'm on holiday and yet I'm writing my PhD Proposal. I'm on holiday and yet I'm reading emails about PLRs and writing to the client. I can't get my head back into the clinic work. I just want to read and write and publish. Why? Is it because the clinic work makes my stomach flip over – anxiety and fear. Fear of getting back on that treadmill. Fear of having to deal with students who aren't coming back to the office for another 2 weeks, or are really unwell and not coping. Or having to keep those who are really trying going and encourage them. Anxiety about cases. Day in day out cases. That I feel run away from me. Because I'm not in control. I'll spend all of tomorrow remembering client names, what we're doing for them, where the students are up to, what needs doing next. I feel like a bad supervisor. Tony Adams emails me about my Autoethnography article and I run around the house. A student emails me about what to do next on case and dread creeps right back in.

5 January 2016

I've just spent over an hour doing pure admin. Going through emails, worrying about projects, printing off autoethnography articles, replying to Tony Adams (Tony Adams!) about my autoethnography article. And now, out loud, I have said "Right, let's put my SLO head on". It's a complete shift. My body language changes. I'm determined. I'm ready for the fight. I'm gearing up to list many many documents and worry about how I'm going to look at them all in the time that the students want them back, in the time that the clients need them back. I start to see the faces of my students. Expectant, pleasant faces. Trying their best. Just wanting to get through. Wanting to please their supervisor.

13 January 2016

I was nervous all of this morning. I had to explain to a student that I thought they were failing, in front of my boss. My nerves weren't based on any anxiety I might have about appearing stupid in front of my line manager (I can handle that). They were a consequence of me continually flitting from thinking about how I would feel if I were the student to frustration at the fact the student didn't seem to comprehend that things weren't going well. A knot – made up of empathy, frustration, dismissal. How would I feel if someone had said these things to me? But then, I would have worked hard. I would have heeded all the warnings I'd had from my supervisor. I would have put more effort in.

It was the first time I've ever felt that I couldn't put a student in front of a client. And I've had some students who have really struggled before. In the past I've had students who have failed other modules but I've worked hard with them and seen them through SLO. They might have had a few NYCs in the competency assessments but I've never thought "god, I can't risk this student being near a client". Who am I trying to save? I'm trying to save the student – I don't want them to fail. I don't want them to fail for selfish reasons – I don't want them back as a resit. I don't want them to fail because it's just a waste. I want to save the client. I don't want the client to have to sit through an awful interview. I don't want them to do something that I wouldn't have advised them to do. I want to save me. I want my reputation to be kept in tact. I don't want the client running to tell all of their networks how poor the students at that SLO are. I'm proud that I'm a good lawyer. I have always worked hard for my clients. I give good advice. I don't want a student to ruin that. I don't want former colleagues laughing at me and my dumbed down legal advice, my failing students and my bad clinic.

The meeting went well. Student didn't seem worried or bothered. Just wanted a good mark. I had to keep going back to the fact that they had to put the effort in and produce the quality. I don't think they can produce the quality and even if they did this would raise the mark but if it's a fail already then how high can it lift it? They just wanted me to say that if they did this extra work they were guaranteed a good mark. Do you crush someone? Do you tell them they haven't got a cat in hell's chance – based on what they've put in? based on the other grades? So I tell them that I just want them to concentrate on passing and if the mark is off a good quality that might have an effect. But passing is where we're aiming for. Do they understand? I don't know. I have now spent hours thinking about this student, writing emails, giving feedback, protecting myself by writing things down, protecting myself by having meetings with her and with the director. I now have an email from another student – a conscientious student – who wants to see me. But I'm exhausted. I've had meetings all morning and

now I want to catch up. And so I feel guilty ignoring that conscientious student. It's meant to be my afternoon away from clinic. Do I email her back and say yes of course pop in and see me or do I push her back?

14 January 2016

Making myself journal. Bit miserable to be honest. It's been one thing after another today with the same theme: chasing students. I do not understand how they don't get that it's just professional courtesy to call or write to a client to let them know you haven't forgotten about them. I swear that if I wasn't pushing them, they'd never get to the point where they got the client back in to advise them. And of course I'm tarring everyone with the same brush. Some do think ahead. They send me letters before I've thought to ask them to write. They draft update emails right on cue. Am I too soft? Should I just give them deadlines and be done with it. But I want them to be able to show that they can be autonomous, responsible individuals. I want to give them that opportunity. I wonder if they want it though. Or would they sigh in relief if I just said "we're going to do some simulated work, and here are some deadlines for getting back to me". It's tiring. Not physically. Just emotionally. I'm sick of feeling like I'm behind. I'm sick of chasing.

18 January 2016

I'm now doing an hour a night to read three articles. I love it so. It's controlled, it's about critically engaging with text. Have I swapped SLO for this? I don't do SLO on a night any more. God, remember all those evenings wading through emails and typing and typing? Not any more. Now I read. Or write. Or faff about with PhD related initiatives. Am I still a good supervisor? Am I still providing the same level of service? Or did I do those students an injustice by placing too much of a burden on them work wise? I'm haunted by the thought that I made it hard for them to complete their dissertation because I took on more cases. Yet at the time, it didn't seem like enough. Or did it seem like the right amount. I don't know. All I know is that there has been a sea-change. Maybe I won't get nominated for Best Supervisor this year. That makes me sad.

19 January 2016

Mid year appraisal time. I'm stressed looking at the files. There's letters on there that look nothing like anything I would have said is ok to go. It's probably just the wrong version. But, inevitably, there will be times when they send out something and I can't get it round my head why they don't pick up it doesn't look right. I feel I'm being quite down in the mid years. But it's not a great year. They take so much time. 12 forms plus reflections. Then 12 meetings.

22 January 2016

Hugely lacking motivation today. I've just spent 2 hours 'writing' an article but I don't feel I've really done any writing, Granted, I've sorted out a structural issue but, honestly, I can normally write a whole piece in this sort of time. I'm distracted by clinic work but I don't want to do that either. It's a bit like being pulled between two worlds and then giving up and doing neither. I don't have a plan and I think that's the problem. I thought I'd do this article today, but then there's been an issue with students putting confidential waste in a non-confidential waste bin and I've now got case work upon case work piling up in my inbox. Can it wait until Monday? Yes. Does that mean I'll have a whole day of clinic work on Monday – yes, but that happens anyway so might as well do it all at once. I wouldn't do any research then anyway – there's no peace and quiet and I need to get things done so I can have a wednesday afternoon 'off' clinic. I wonder what others do. Would they just do a few jobs and not be worried about it? I'm always trying to make the most of my time. Maybe I should chill out and not worry about a 'dodgy' day.

25 January 2016

If I didn't have all of these documents to do, I could help so many more clients. There's just documents flooding my inbox. I'm working through them methodically – which is the most pressing, which can wait – but they arrive over and over again. Now we have a new client that I could help on the phone now. I could sort it all out now. But I'm wading through LPC assessments and long letters and practical research reports and appt letters and update letters and then meetings, more meetings. It's non stop clinic. It never seems to end. Then it's mid year appraisals. I'm looking forward to it ending. It's the crunch point as with every year at this time. A bit like birth – you have to get to the bit where you don't think you can go on and then you get through it.

2 February 2016

Knock knock. Are you busy? Knock, knock. Are you busy? And the look on my face says yes this is the only hour I have to myself today and I'm in the middle of eating my pasta salad. But they still come in and sit down and start asking me questions about training contracts and graduate recruitment schemes. And my face still says 'why are you sitting down? I am still scooping pasta madly into my face because I have 24 minutes until my next meeting'. And they continue. Last week I spent 31 hours on clinic. I am shattered. I want a day off, but nothing seems to be winding down. I truly thought that if I worked all of last week to clear my clinic work I would have a lovely week this week. It hasn't been like that. The list has continued to grow. It's never ending. Am I creating work for myself? Yes, that is the case. I'm already thinking about the extra work I need to give to a student so she has something to do in these next 8 weeks. I know she wants to do well so I'm giving her opportunities to do that because she's already been so good and completed work ahead of time. Sometimes I think it's better to have good students, sometimes I think it's a bind. They want more. They need more. They're ambitious. They don't just plod on and have 'gaps' in their workload.

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I'm feeling hugely overwhelmed. I've seen students all day. I've had mid year appraisals. I've had meetings. I'm totally doubting the legal advice I'm giving on a case. It's the first time all year I've felt teary. My inbox is full. There's loads of casework to be done and feedback to be given. I'll get through it all, but I'm starting to feel as though I'm back to three firms, with no time for anything else.

8 February 2016

Today I am not overwhelmed. My Mid Year Appraisals are all done, my case work is manageable, and I'm working from home in lovely surroundings. It's 35 minutes in and I've already completed feedback on two letters. I have two other full advice letters, an attendance note and two mock documents (interview plan and letter) to check. Obviously other things are going to come in. My stomach just did a flip when I think about another case that's on the move. I'll have a memo to check on that and then an interview plan – that one needs to move quickly so we can give some triage advice. Other casework has turned into mock for the last 8 weeks and the difference is palpable. I'm not constantly thinking about needing to appease a client, or consider what that client is thinking about

me as a solicitor. I can concentrate on giving feedback to the student. And that feedback can be light touch – I can let things go. I still don't feel like I'm in control of my cases through. I'm going to do a review of the case files tomorrow when I'm back in the office. At the moment, I couldn't tell you exactly what is happening on each of the cases. It's not in my control, but it is in my control. There are some cases that I know are moving forward at a glacial pace. Am I sad about this? Yes. It's not the service I want to give. Am I going to push to get things out by the end of this week? No, because then I have to do so much more and then find the students more to do. I cannot wait for the 8 weeks to be over. I'm now on countdown.

21 February 2016

What I don't understand is how people can fail to think about the students. I want to step in and take on those students. I think about their experience compared to other students. Part of me thinks of sweeping in all heroic and saving them. But this is self indulgent, not my job and certainly not going to give me time to do other things. But what's the point of doing the job if you don't care about what happens to the students? It's all about the teaching. The research you do on the side and you find some time to do that. But the students are what make the university turn. It is an educational institution, not a research project or a CPD factory. I read an article in the Times Higher Education about work life balance for academics. None of the people who wrote about their academic experiences mentioned the students and the joy of teaching. It was all about their lab time, the admin (is that what teaching is for some academics?). It makes me feel sad for the students.

And then I think about what I need to do to complete my PhD. Will I have to become the thing I despise? Will I be the woman with office hours? Will I take on even fewer cases? Will I make excuses because I'm doing the PhD? Will I start to say no to looking at training contract applications? Will I hide in the library or at home? So much change, and all we can do is take one day at a time and do the job. But what is the job going to be. You don't get any awards or a promotion for looking at training contract applications late at night.

[Redacted]

23 February 2016

It's 2.30pm and I have a headache. I've been in since 7.45 and I haven't stopped. I've just had 5 students in to see me back to back. There was a queue outside the office at one stage. Not all to do with SLO; one about the blog, one about careers advice, rest about cases. One troubles me. He wants a first. I've already said that he isn't at first stage on some of the descriptors. But he keeps pushing: "I want an LPC mock interview too" "You don't need one. I've thought this through. You have two opportunities for interviews. I don't think you're going to fail either but if you do then we'll do a simulated interview. But there's no point in doing it now" "If I write these letters will that get me to where I want to be" "It's not a black and white issue. Each letter isn't graded as such. It's a case of getting to the end of the year, putting in your file and making sure you've done your best quality work". I feel drained; trying to balance encouragement with realism, trying to be firm but not quash spirit, trying to protect myself and yet be an open, approachable supervisor. Days like these make the PhD seem like Mission Impossible.

26 February 2016

Am I angry? Well, I guess I am. Maybe I'm more frustrated. Why is this work full of errors? Why am I sitting here rewriting an interview plan when I'm on research leave? It's not as if they've not looked at this topic before – it's exactly the same as the last case! So I'm annoyed that I'm having to correct it. I'm annoyed that I have to re-write the same stuff over and over again. Why not send it back? Well because it's Friday, the interview is on Wednesday and I'm not back in the office until Tuesday. They know that. What they don't know is that my Tuesday is busy and I don't want to spend time faffing on with an interview plan at speed just to get it back to them ready for Wednesday. So I faff on with it now and send it back. But they'll probably not pick it up until Tuesday so why am I bothering? And then I get hit with guilt – what if giving them a similar case was bad for that student? What if they would have thrived on a different case that involved different principles? But then, hang, this is fourth year of a Masters level course. You've already done it, why is it wrong? And then I start thinking about assessment – is this 2:2 standard now? So I feel bad, because they will feel bad. And I would hate to get something bad where there were so many errors pointed out. But then if I had done that standard of work isn't that what I'd be expecting? Do they really give a stuff?

11 March 2016

I've thought so much over the past few weeks, so it's annoying that I haven't journaled. I just haven't felt like it to be honest. It swims around my head and sometimes putting it down here makes it come alive, and that makes it more painful, more real. At least in head I can blur the lines a bit. In black and white, you can't escape it. Anyway, last Friday I was on leave to go to a funeral. What possessed me to check my work emails less than an hour before the funeral is something only the deepest darkest parts of my brain know. But I did. And there was an email from a student telling me about a client interview that had taken place that morning. I could see straight away that he was troubled. It hadn't gone as well as expected. The client through a curveball in – new information that changed the advice. Immediately I start looking up the answer. I'm panicked that we will have to do more work. That I will have to do more work. I find a workaround in about 20 minutes. I worry that the student will worry all weekend. So I email them back, tell them not to worry and that I think there's a simple way ahead. All whilst I'm about to go to a funeral and am on leave. Later, that student's friend tells me that the student was worried my email was short and that I was annoyed at him. I laugh. What can you do?

I'm annoyed at the client, though. You've known since October we were going to do this work. Why tell us this information now? Why have I bothered? But then of course I start thinking about what I would have done in real life practice. I would have met them asked them loads of questions and probably found this info out right at the start. We didn't do that. We just offered this work as an extra add on, that they probably didn't want in the first place. I fear they're going to tell other people we're rubbish. But I also want rid. We're coming to the end of the year and we've done so much. None of it paid for. Should that matter? Well, it does. Because no one cares how many matters we deal with. We just do it. There isn't a tally. I make a mental note not to agree to do so much next year, and to try to fill gaps with non-live work.

Today, I was offered the opportunity to go to another conference. But I've turned it down. I don't want to spend time away from home [redacted] but that's not my main concern. My main concern – and I hate myself for this – is that I feel I should be in the office dealing with client work. If I go, that'll be two weeks away. I feel I need to be here because my students are so slow and I need to be able to turn things round when they arrive, eventually. They have all the time in the world, and I just have whatever is left. We have a window and I get the scraps if they can't manage their time properly.

7 April 2016

It's the Spring Break. Nearly all of my cases are coming to an end. I've worked hard to get them into this position. When I think back to the list of letter and PLRs I had to look at, revise, amend, feedback on I feel a sense of relief that it's coming to an end again for another year. I came in this week and straight away put clinic at the forefront of what I was doing, Two plus hours on one advice letter. Sent to the students so they can send it out. Right now, I give little feedback compared to before. I don't see the point in sending them lots of 'you could have done this'. They can see what I've done from the track changes. And it's pointless to send huge swathes of feedback now, weeks before the end. It doesn't serve anyone. And – important point- the client needed that letter. It's been over 6 weeks since the students had contact with the client. One part of me is just gutted. What does that look like? Will we ever get any more clients if we carry on like this? The other part of me says 'that's what they signed up for, free advice by students, and anyway I can't physically make them go faster. I push gently, I send emails, I say agt the end of meetings 'come on now' but if they don't do that then what can I do. And if they have a disability and I know they're struggling with mental health issues, I've got a duty of care. I can't say 'drive up from where you live and sit here until that letter is finished'. That's not my job.

I just want the cases to end and the students to leave. Everyone says the same thing. They're counting down.

12 April 2016











I feel that I haven't journaled for ages so it's a real surprise when I see that my last entry was only 5 days ago. Yesterday, I had the strongest feeling so far that I wasn't a lawyer anymore. I've spent huge parts of Friday and the weekend immersing myself in my research. And I loved every bit of it. And yesterday I spent 3 hours during work time and 3 hours during the evening (and I had to make myself stop on the evening) doing my AE article. I felt guilty for not spending a whole day doing clinic. I never feel guilty for not doing research. It's a weird phenomenon. I feel guilty that I've got a strong research banding. I feel guilty that I'm loving the research. I have so many ideas for articles I have to strap my brain down and keep pushing the thoughts back. I feel like Patch in Santa Claus the Movie. He had loads of ideas (hmmm, but then it all goes wrong with John Lithgow) and I can hear him saying that from the film over and over again. And I can hear the music pushing on and on and on as the machines go round and round and round.

The office is really quiet, but the students continue to barge in. I wonder why they don't heed my requests for appointments or to drop me an email. I said in nicely but plainly in an email. Some don't do it at all. But others knock and then burst into conversation when I'm right in the middle of something. I've got tougher these past few weeks and have said 'I'm in the middle of something, can you come back or can I see you later?'. I've been back in the office two days and already I've seen four students – out of 12. And there's no reason they need to see me face to face. Those students want connection. They want to be seen to be seen. How do I say that they're not helping their cause – in fact they're showing me that they can't be autonomous, that they can't just get on with it. They want the big marks and they think seeing me all the time and being engaged all the time will do that. It will in certain categories of the descriptor but it forces down the others. But there's two weeks left so there's no point in saying this to them now. And actually, haven't I said that face to face and in an email to everyone?

The cases are coming to the end but still they can't do the closing procedure right. This I do not understand. I can see straight away that letters are missing and that boxes are not ticked. Why can't they? Or why can't some and not others? Procedural issues plague me. I should just be signing files off to be closed but instead I have to email about forms not being filled in, documents being missing, minor errors that mean I can't sign it off. And then it goes back and then it comes back. Should I just wait until they have gone to do this? And why am I having to remind a pair of students that it's been three weeks since the deadline they gave the client and they should have sent me a closing letter by now. They have 1 case. All they are doing is waiting for a deadline to pass. It has passed. Why is it so hard to plan ahead, to realise something needs to be done? Do I send the email? Or do I remind them in firm meeting? Or do I wait for them to realise? I want the file closed. Client care and correct procedure means the file needs to be closed. Argh! So much time and effort into something I would have done in 2 minutes if it was just me dealing. I'm ready for them to leave now. 12 working days to go.

Appendix 2

Cleaned version of my diary with original codes dated 31 May 2017

1	7 October 15 (after first firm meeting)	<p>Kicking myself for a rubbish firm meeting. Have so many teaching ideas and then I just do a sit and chat. Tomorrow's meeting will be so much better but is that fair to the students today? And what do I do with them next week? Why didn't I just do what I wanted to do? Because I didn't have a board marker? Because it was easier? Probably because I had been so held up and not prepared at all, even though I was prepared 2 weeks ago. Feel like a bad teacher.</p> <p>If I had given the enquiry out – would that have enthused them more? Now I am stuck with a first come first served system. I could have given the enquiry out and then spread out the work between the firm. But then would a client want to come in for three different advice interviews. Or would it be fair to the ones who did get an advice interview and those who didn't? I long for the days when we had enquiries for everyone – and I had more students then! We do more marketing, more media – why do we have so few enquiries?</p>	<p> Elaine Gregeisen Labelling</p> <p> Elaine Gregeisen Logistics - enquiries</p> <p> Elaine Gregeisen CONFLICT BETWEEN STUDENT NEEDS AND CLIENT NEEDS RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENT?</p>
2	11 October 15	<p>The Winter Break. Each year, students are told that their term ends on a certain date. This is usually two weeks before our office shuts for a few days. So what do you do when your students want to go home, or on holiday? The only question that came up in the firm meeting. That feeling of dread and inevitability that this is going to creep back up on you. And then the weekend email saying that they're going away before the break. Is that ok? Well, not really. A sickening feeling. An angry feeling. Is it taken seriously? Is the role – advising a real client – understood? What does it mean? What are you thinking? Then the calm. Why am I getting upset about this? Why does this keep popping up in my head in moments of silence when walking around town. Why, a day later is this still there. Gnawing away. I think of the stress if the client wants or needs to come in for advice during the weeks they are away. I think of my role – responsibility to the client, responsibility to the student. I think of the student. Other things in their life. Family commitments. I think of what I'm going to say. "Well, I can't make you be a university but... but it might affect your assessment (ominous, threatening), but it might affect you being able to advise the client..., but we don't know what's going to happen and what will you do if the client needs to be advised that week?" But then we don't even have any clients yet. So it's just worry. Gnawing worry. What would others do? Some would be strict and say it like it is – you're here to do a module, you have a responsibility. I don't want to do that. Because what happens if the work is done and it makes no difference? My biggest concern is that the cases aren't here and we don't get things moving along and then everything is delayed. Gnawing worry and irritation.</p>	<p> Elaine Gregeisen students' understanding of their role</p> <p> Elaine Gregeisen NOT SWITCHING OFF</p> <p> Elaine Gregeisen logistics – case management</p> <p> Elaine Gregeisen CONFLICT BETWEEN STUDENT AND CLIENT NEEDS</p> <p> Elaine Gregeisen logistics – enquiries</p>
3	22 October 15	<p>An entire, headache inducing day of supervision. There were highs and lows. The high was the enthusiasm with which my students came bounding into my room post-interview. I was able to ask lots of questions and help them come to a strategy for moving forward. What I loved the most was the way that they talked about their firm being close and all wanting to help each other. They pointed out team members who they thought their work could help. They wanted to help the client. They wanted to help their team. Then the low is the constant need to push things on, to chase, to focus students' minds on the reality of live client work. Is it okay not to come in to the office? On the one hand, how is a student meant to know that something will kick</p>	<p> Elaine Gregeisen logistics – case management</p> <p> Elaine Gregeisen LACK OF CONTROL – CHASING STUDENTS</p>

		<p>off? We can't expect them to sit in the office all day, waiting, or even in uni all day, on the off chance that 'something' will happen? But what if something does happen? What if we need to move things along at speed? What if things are moving along at speed and they're not there? Is it okay to ask those students to come in to the office? This is my struggle. I want them to come in. To deal with it. I think about the lecture they have at the beginning of the year that says they should be aiming for 10-15 hours. I think of the whole point of experiential education. I think about their assessment. I think about the client. I think about what other supervisors will think about me and my students – how my students' lack of engagement reflects negatively on me. Then I think about the student, trying to juggle life, other modules, family issues. I think about how I don't know where they live. Did they have to travel far to come in? Are they unwell with all the bugs going around? I think about how I would feel if I were sat at home and received an email from my supervisor saying that things were happening on the case. I think about the students with disability statements. Will this urgency, this need to be flexible, impact on their health? Will they give up now before we've begun because the stress is too much? I walk around town for half an hour and when I return to my desk it's late afternoon and nothing has happened. Eventually things get sorted - a student comes in. But then I'm the one sitting in my office at 5.30pm with a bad back and headache, feeling like I've been from one thing to another constantly 'runaway train-ing'. I love my job. I hate my job.</p> <p><i>The struggle to balance supervision with research: I want to take Fridays to do research. My students know I'm not available on Fridays. But now a client is coming in in 2 days and I am panicked. Will my students be able to turn the plan around in time. If I get it on Monday when am I going to look at it? I'm already scheduling work over the weekend to make space on Monday for this. But then they might not get it to me by Monday. Tuesday is hell, one meeting after another, and a late night when I'm taking students to an event. I haven't even started looking at my conference paper for next week. I want to cry as this was my dream – to get into the AE conference. I'm struck by how little my teaching made to my promotion application and my research was a whole section.</i></p>
4	4 November 2015	<p>Fuming. The movement from fume to not so fume. But still fuming beneath the surface and sense of panic and having no control over your own time management.</p> <p><i>What do you do when someone is working on a completely different timescale to your own? It has been a week since I asked for a document to be sent out. It has not been sent out. It has remained in the inbox, not doing anything. I raced to check that email and return feedback before I left to go to my conference. I did that because I want to be a good supervisor. I don't want to leave students hanging, waiting for me to help them progress their work. I felt good that I had worked hard to get the feedback back to them. They could then send it out. But it remained in the inbox. And when I have asked why it hasn't been sent out, I am met with confusion – "well, we thought you wouldn't be able to look at it until you came back from the conference" "well, you said it didn't need to go out until next Thursday". But I said in the email "here you go, please send it out". Is there any way</i></p>



Elaine Gregersen
SWITCHING OFF



Elaine Gregersen
MANY HATS – CONFLICT WITH RESEARCH











Elaine Gregersen
logistics – time management









Elaine Gregersen
LACK OF CONTROL



Elaine Gregersen
logistics – time management

		<p>I can be clearer? I want to be petulant and say how I worked really hard to get that document back to them so that they could move on, so I was a good supervisor. But it sounds childish. So I don't say it. I say that I'm concerned for them. I want them to do well. And they can't do well if the case isn't progressing. They leave and I am still fuming under the surface. I have no control. I am dancing to their tune. Should I have gone to the conference and done the work when I got back? Would they have cared? Noticed? Now we are all not very happy with each other.</p>	 Elaine Gregersen logistics: time management
			 Elaine Gregersen LACK OF CONTROL
5	11 November 2015	<p>A breach.</p> <p>What possessed you to do it? Why did you think it was okay to breach procedures like this? We've gone through the need for confidentiality, the policies, the procedures, the rules. We've talked about why those rules are important. We wouldn't put in place things like separate accounts, swipe cards etc if it wasn't something important. Why have you done this?</p> <p>Why don't you seem to care? Is it me – am I too not 'scary' enough? Did I, in some way, give signs that it wouldn't be a bother if you didn't do things the right way. Should I have taken you to task a few weeks ago when I suspected that you were not pulling your weight, and that others through their deeds and words were suggesting that they were annoyed by this? I wanted to give you time to bed in, and to prove that you could pull it together. Maybe you just needed time. Maybe when things got going, it would bring it to life and the immediacy of giving real legal advice to real people would sink in.</p> <p>I have had this conversation with you for the past 6 hours. Over and over in my head I go through what I'm going to say and how I'm going to say it. I want to impress how serious a breach of procedure is. It's threefold. It affects me as it's my practising certificate you work under. I am responsible for your actions. It affects the client. You have breached our policies – what would that client think about you and the SLO? And it affects you. Because this is part of your assessment. It will inevitably affect your grade. And I want to say that I will have no hesitation to take you away from live clients if I think I/the client/the clinic is compromised.</p> <p>Why did you do it? What is happening behind the scenes? Why could you not come in the office, which is open 9-5 every day? Is there something wrong? So I am torn. I want to be furious. I am furious. As a professional I want you to pull your socks up, acknowledge the seriousness of your actions and show some maturity and professionalism. As a teacher, I know that education is about making mistakes and moving on from that. I also know that you are a human being with a life outside of my one module. I do not want to make your life difficult. I only want to help. I do not want you to fail. I want you to succeed. Please succeed. As a solicitor, I just want the work to be done. I want to draft the document that you have been working on (or not) for 2 weeks and just get it out to the client. As a researcher, I sigh thinking about all of the time that I have spent this afternoon – the Wednesday afternoon I keep free, where I am not available – dealing with this, and other panicking students, and client emails and practical</p>	 Elaine Gregersen students' understanding of their role
			 Elaine Gregersen RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS
			 Elaine Gregersen NOT SWITCHING OFF STUDENTS' ACTIVITY OR LACK OF ACTIVITY IMPACT ON ME
			 Elaine Gregersen MANY HATS – WITHIN SLO MULTIFACETED RESPONSIBILITY?
			 Elaine Gregersen INVESTED IN STUDENT
			 Elaine Gregersen MANY HATS – WITHIN AND OUTSIDE SLO

		<p>legal research reports. I don't resent it. I could have turned off my email and thought about all of that another day. But the research comes last. Providing a service to the students and the clients is always there. </p> <p>-----</p> <p>I query whether I have bonded with my students. This is the first year that I don't really feel that connection. It may be because we have been together for such a short period of time. I'm sure that it's been like this in previous years but I don't remember meetings being this painful. One group in particular are quiet and there are big personalities in that group. It's interesting to think about why this connection or bond is so important to me. Much like colleagues we are forced together. <u>Much like colleagues I want us to "get on". Like when you share an office with someone, you find a way of working together, you talk about personal matters, you talk about work, you gossip and share and help each other to navigate the academic world. Is this what clinic replicates? Or is it a maternal connection?</u> These are my students. My bunch of 12. My firms. I want them to do well. I want them to succeed. They drive me mad, but I can see the person behind the student and they're not <i>bad</i> people. They're just learning. And I know that at the end of the year I want them to look back at this as the best experience they've had. I do it for them. </p>	<p> Elaine Gregerisen RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS</p> <p> Elaine Gregerisen INVESTED IN STUDENTS</p> <p> Elaine Gregerisen <u>conflict</u> between clinic and <u>non-clinic</u> work</p> <p> Elaine Gregerisen CLINIC FIRST</p>
6	23 November 2015	<p>I want to do clinic work all day. I want to down tools and start going through my table of clinic work and see what is to be done and when. But that's not what my workload says I should be doing. Really, I should be finishing my PhD Proposal, sorting out research administration, asking to be a reviewer of another journal, completing an application for an award, updating the <u>eLP</u>, writing that article on autoethnography. But I'm not. Today, I'm going to review three legal documents (website terms of use, privacy policy and cookie policy). I'm going to have a meeting with my students to explore each of those documents, give guidance on the structure and content of their interview advising the client on that document, give reassurance that everything is going well and take a peek into the future and plan out a strategy for what happens if this or that occurs. I'm also going to review and give feedback on an 8 page legal research report and organise a meeting to discuss that document and what lies ahead. I'll chase another student for work that has not arrived by the deadline. I'll review and give feedback on a letter. I'll review and give feedback on another letter. And, I'll fit in some of the other things that my workload says that I should be doing as and when I can. I'll also deal with students popping in and seeing me throughout the course of the day, or stopping me in the office. </p>	
7	24 Nov 2015	<p>Running around, back and forward down the corridor. Trying to sort. Attempting to sort. <u>Being an authority figure, a source of guidance. Eyes appealing to me: "what do we do next?" "what are the next steps?" "give us some reassurance" "make us feel calm and confident" "make it all okay". That's been my morning.</u> Complete immersion in the clinic. </p> <p>Three hours on two documents for the same student. I'm so <u>frustrated but yet trying to find supportive words</u>. The work is poor. It's probably the poorest I've seen in 5 years. I have spent three hours reviewing and providing feedback. I've read the feedback</p>	<p> Elaine Gregerisen CLINIC FIRST – ALWAYS THERE</p> <p> Elaine Gregerisen RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENT</p>

		out to a colleague to check it's balanced. I don't want to crush the student, but I also want to make them aware that the work is poor. Partly because I want to protect myself if I end up giving a poor mark. Partly because it has to be said and I wonder about the quality of our graduates. <i>I think about my time as a student – would have been dedicated to SLO? Would I have produced work of this quality? I don't want to 'lose' this student. I have to work with them for the rest of the year. And they're not 'bad'. But I have to tell the truth. On a day like this I feel that I'm stuck in between being someone's mentor and their boss.</i>
8	26 November 2015	I get to my desk at 9am. I start reading about theoretical perspectives. I want to update the DLaw group with book & article recommendations. But the list of clinic documents is piling up. Letters, research reports, interview plans. The pull of this work is too much. I feel this must be where my attentions lie. Although my brain tells me that this work is meaningless to my career. My role as a clinical supervisor will be one line in my CV, in any promotions criteria. No-one will care that I sat for three hours looking at two documents for the same student. No-one will care about the time that I took to find the right, most supportive, most balanced words. Career-wise it makes much more sense to concentrate on 'research' focussed tasks. I swallow that down and get on with listing the clinic work to be done this morning. <i>I can't let the students down.</i>
9	3 December 2015	Today I am a bad supervisor . I wanted to come in a little later than usual. I wanted a bit of a rest, especially as I knew I would be working late tonight. I wandered through the revolving doors at 9.30am. I saw my students. They shouldn't have been there. Their client was late. There wouldn't be any free rooms left if she didn't turn up soon. Bag still in hand, coat still on I calmed them down and ran up the stairs to sort out rooms. I couldn't even set up my computer properly – all morning it was one thing after another. Could the meeting be changed? When could the students do it? When could the client do it? <i>Knock, knock. Knock, knock.</i> Constant stream of students through my door all wanting a piece of me. I walked through the SLO. More meetings, more discussions. Constant stream of supervisory, calming, positive words. <i>Is everyone ok? How are you feeling about it? Don't worry. Don't worry. Let's think about next steps. This is what I'd like you to next. Don't worry about it. Knock, knock. Knock, knock.</i> Torn in so many different directions. I need to do this form. I want to do this form. I can't do this form because all I have is <i>knock, knock. Knock, knock.</i> And it's important. It's client work. It needs to be done. The students need support. The client needs their advice. I need a rest. Please can I just have an hour where I can sit quietly and think.
10	4 December 2015	Why do I drop everything to come to a student's aid? Here I am, working from home, huge list of admin and research to do. But I check my email and see two worried emails from students following a client interview and <i>I drop everything to write an email to both giving comfort and guidance.</i> I tried to carry out with what I was doing. But all I could see was their little faces. I could hear them stressing to each other. It's like an itch you have to scratch. Part of me thought about ringing the office and speaking to them, to make them feel better. What on earth?!



Elaine Gregersen

CLINIC FIRST: CONFLICT BETWEEN RESEARCH AND CLINIC



Elaine Gregersen

CLINIC FIRST: ALWAYS THERE



Elaine Gregersen

constancy








Elaine Gregersen

conflict between clinic and non-clinic work



Elaine Gregersen

CLINIC FIRST: CONFLICT BETWEEN CLINIC AND NON CLINIC

		<p>Ever felt sick to your stomach? I get a wave of sickness in my stomach when students email about client queries. I know that the best thing for the client is for me to pick up the phone and give them the advice. I can answer those points quickly and easily. But my students can't. They need time. What if the client doesn't appear to realise that? What if they see them as a free service where they can keep asking and asking? I'm stuck between two worlds. I'm a lawyer. I'm a good lawyer. And I can tell the client what they need to know within minutes. But I also have to protect the students. They don't know the answers. They need time to find the answers and then relay them. This can take weeks. So what sort of service am I/we giving the client. What will this client think of me? Do I push them away? I'm not going to pick up the phone and provide the advice. But if I don't do that, they might become dissatisfied with the service. Our reputation will suffer. My reputation will suffer. All of this on a Friday, when I'm meant to be researching. And I still feel sick.</p>	 Elaine Gregersen MANY HATS: LAWYER AND TEACHER	 Elaine Gregersen CLINIC FIRST: CONFLICT BETWEEN CLINIC AND NON CLINIC	
11	18 December 2015	<p>I'm a little disturbed by the long time periods between journal entries. I've had so many moments since 4 December where I kept thinking 'I must write this down, I must write this down'. But then I don't. I'm distracted. I prioritise other things. Last night, I had loads to say after finishing the DLaw taught sessions but I just didn't sit down and write. Because I was busy writing the PhD Proposal and I somehow prioritised that. Even though this is part of the PhD.</p> <p>Is it okay to write after the event? Is one day okay? Is it okay to think back further?</p> <p>Thinking back to yesterday, I wanted my entry to say that I'd spent three whole days doing no substantive clinic work. I looked at emails as they came and noted that things needed doing, but it wasn't until I received an email about a problem sending a letter out that I actually physically did something. I feel very conflicted about how much I enjoy time away from the clinic. I loved the three days talking about doing the PhD. I loved talking about autoethnography and what it means to me. I loved thinking of answers to difficult questions. I loved the sense of community we have established in the DLaw group. But I felt guilty that I hadn't responded to students when they had emailed me work to thank them for that work. I'm also struggling to motivate myself to do my clinic work. It feels hard, heavy and a weight around my neck. I feel that it takes so long. I have to set aside time to do it otherwise I will miss something. I missed something on one case and now I'm having to put it right. If I had gone into the interview then I would have had the knowledge to answer the question the client asked. But it took so long to get the students to a stage where they were even near the right answer to the central question, I didn't work with them on the peripheral points that could come up. Of course, the client then naturally clung onto a peripheral point and now I'm having to go back into the advice letter and add this work in. Then I feel guilty for not raising this with the student who has written the letter. I'm not trying to find the words to say 'I missed this' without saying I missed it but at the same time not make her feel that she's done something wrong, although I'm also thinking 'you should have' ('should have' 'could have?') picked this up. Then I worry about the client. What sort of service are they getting? Then I worry about me. How many times will I need to see this letter before it can go out? I will spend hours on that first draft letter. I will amend it and add comments. Then I will complete</p>	 Elaine Gregersen CLINIC FIRST: CONFLICT BETWEEN CLINIC AND NON CLINIC	 Elaine Gregersen conflict between clinic and non clinic work	 Elaine Gregersen MANY HATS: TEACHER, LAWYER

		a form for LPC assessment to say whether it is competent or not. Then the student will amend it. Then I will look at it again and give more feedback. I will probably need to change it. Sometimes I just want to put all of my experience, and the nuance, of advising into their heads. I wonder where all of my experience comes from. Who gave it to me? How did they do it? I'm thinking back to all of the partners I've worked with. Am I just an amalgamation of them? I can't remember specific things they 'taught' me to do.
12	4 January 2016	For the first time, I don't want to do clinic work. I feel torn apart. I'm on holiday and yet I'm writing my PhD Proposal. I'm on holiday and yet I'm reading emails about PLRs and writing to the client. I can't get my head back into the clinic work. I just want to read and write and publish. Why? Is it because the clinic work makes my stomach flip over – anxiety and fear. Fear of getting back on that treadmill. Fear of having to deal with students who aren't coming back to the office for another 2 weeks, or are really unwell and not coping. Or having to keep those who are really trying going and encourage them. Anxiety about cases. Day in day out cases. That I feel run away from me. Because I'm not in control. I'll spend all of tomorrow remembering client names, what we're doing for them, where the students are up to, what needs doing next. I feel like a bad supervisor. Tony Adams emails me about my Autoethnography article and I run around the house. A student emails me about what to do next on case and dread creeps right back in.
13	5 January 2016	I've just spent over an hour doing pure admin. Going through emails, worrying about projects, printing off autoethnography articles, replying to Tony Adams (Tony Adams!) about my autoethnography article. And now, out loud, I have said "Right, let's put my SLO head on". It's a complete shift. My body language changes. I'm determined. I'm ready for the fight. I'm gearing up to list many many documents and worry about how I'm going to look at them all in the time that the students want them back, in the time that the clients need them back. I start to see the faces of my students. Expectant, pleasant faces. Trying their best. Just wanting to get through. Wanting to please their supervisor.
14	13 January 2016	I was nervous all of this morning. I had to explain to a student that I thought they were failing, in front of my boss. My nerves weren't based on any anxiety I might have about appearing stupid in front of my line manager (I can handle that). They were a consequence of me continually flitting from thinking about how I would feel if I were the student to frustration at the fact the student didn't seem to comprehend that things weren't going well. A knot – made up of empathy, frustration, dismissal. How would I feel if someone had said these things to me? But then, I would have worked hard. I would have heeded all the warnings I'd had from my supervisor. I would have put more effort in. It was the first time I've ever felt that I couldn't put a student in front of a client. And I've had some students who have really struggled before. In the past I've had students who have failed other modules but I've worked hard with them and seen them through SLO. They might have had a few NYCs in the competency assessments but I've never thought "god, I can't risk this



Elaine Gregersen
conflict between clinic and non clinic work



Elaine Gregersen
CLINIC FIRST: CONFLICT BETWEEN CLINIC AND NON CLINIC WORK



Elaine Gregersen
MANY HATS: TEACHER BUT LAWYER



Elaine Gregersen
logistics – time management



Elaine Gregersen
empathy



Elaine Gregersen
MANY HATS: STUDENT, CLIENT, TEACHER, LAWYER, REPUTATION

		<p>student being near a client". Who am I trying to save? I'm trying to save the student – I don't want them to fail. I don't want them to fail for selfish reasons – I don't want them back as a resit. I don't want them to fail because it's just a waste. I want to save the client. I don't want the client to have to sit through an awful interview. I don't want them to do something that I wouldn't have advised them to do. I want to save me. I want my reputation to be kept in tact. I don't want the client running to tell all of their networks how poor the students at that SLO are. I'm proud that I'm a good lawyer. I have always worked hard for my clients. I give good advice. I don't want a student to ruin that. I don't want former colleagues laughing at me and my dumbed down legal advice, my failing students and my bad clinic.</p> <p>The meeting went well. Student didn't seem worried or bothered. Just wanted a good mark. I had to keep going back to the fact that they had to put the effort in and produce the quality. I don't think they can produce the quality and even if they did this would raise the mark but if it's a fail already then how high can it lift it? They just wanted me to say that if they did this extra work they were guaranteed a good mark. Do you crush someone? Do you tell them they haven't got a cat in hell's chance – based on what they've put in? based on the other grades? So I tell them that I just want them to concentrate on passing and if the mark is off a good quality that might have an effect. But passing is where we're aiming for. Do they understand? I don't know. I have now spent hours thinking about this student, writing emails, giving feedback, protecting myself by writing things down, protecting myself by having meetings with her and with the director. I now have an email from another student – a conscientious student – who wants to see me. But I'm exhausted. I've had meetings all morning and now I want to catch up. And so I feel guilty ignoring that conscientious student. It's meant to be my afternoon away from clinic. Do I email her back and say yes of course pop in and see me or do I push her back?</p>
15	14 January 2016	<p>Making myself journal. Bit miserable to be honest. It's been one thing after another today with the same theme: chasing students. I do not understand how they don't get that it's just professional courtesy to call or write to a client to let them know you haven't forgotten about them. I swear that if I wasn't pushing them, they'd never get to the point where they got the client back in to advise them. And of course I'm tarring everyone with the same brush. Some do think ahead. They send me letters before I've thought to ask them to write. They draft update emails right on cue. Am I too soft? Should I just give them deadlines and be done with it. But I want them to be able to show that they can be autonomous, responsible individuals. I want to give them that opportunity. I wonder if they want it though. Or would they sigh in relief if I just said "we're going to do some simulated work, and here are some deadlines for getting back to me". It's tiring. Not physically. Just emotionally. I'm sick of feeling like I'm behind. I'm sick of chasing.</p>
16	18 January 2016	<p>I'm now doing an hour a night to read three articles. I love it so. It's controlled, it's about critically engaging with text. Have I swapped SLO for this? I don't do SLO on a night any more. God, remember all those evenings wading through emails and typing and typing? Not any more. Now I read. Or write. Or faff about with PhD related initiatives. Am I still a good supervisor? Am I still</p>



Elaine Gregeisen
CLINIC FIRST



Elaine Gregeisen
conflict between clinic and non-clinic work



Elaine Gregeisen
student understanding of role



Elaine Gregeisen
logistics – case management



Elaine Gregeisen
conflict between clinic and non-clinic work



Elaine Gregeisen
LACK OF CONTROL – LINKING INTO CONFLICT BETWEEN CLINIC NON CLINIC

		providing the same level of service? Or did I do those students an injustice by placing too much of a burden on them work wise? I'm haunted by the thought that I made it hard for them to complete their dissertation because I took on more cases. Yet at the time, it didn't seem like enough. Or did it seem like the right amount. I don't know. All I know is that there has been a sea-change. Maybe I won't get nominated for Best Supervisor this year. That makes me sad.
17	19 January 2016	Mid year appraisal time. I'm stressed looking at the files. There's letters on there that look nothing like anything I would have said is ok to go. It's probably just the wrong version. But, inevitably, there will be times when they send out something and I can't get it round my head why they don't pick up it doesn't look right. I feel I'm being quite down in the mid years. But it's not a great year. They take so much time. 12 forms plus reflections. Then 12 meetings.
18	22 January 2016	Hugely lacking motivation today. I've just spent 2 hours 'writing' an article but I don't feel I've really done any writing. Granted, I've sorted out a structural issue but, honestly, I can normally write a whole piece in this sort of time. I'm distracted by clinic work but I don't want to do that either. It's a bit like being pulled between two worlds and then giving up and doing neither. I don't have a plan and I think that's the problem. I thought I'd do this article today, but then there's been an issue with students putting confidential waste in a non-confidential waste bin and I've now got case work upon case work piling up in my inbox. Can it wait until Monday? Yes. Does that mean I'll have a whole day of clinic work on Monday – yes, but that happens anyway so might as well do it all at once. I wouldn't do any research then anyway – there's no peace and quiet and I need to get things done so I can have a wednesday afternoon off clinic. I wonder what others do. Would they just do a few jobs and not be worried about it? I'm always trying to make the most of my time. Maybe I should chill out and not worry about a 'dodgy' day.
19	25 January 2016	If I didn't have all of these documents to do, I could help so many more clients. There's just documents flooding my inbox. I'm working through them methodically – which is the most pressing, which can wait – but they arrive over and over again. Now we have a new client that I could help on the phone now. I could sort it all out now. But I'm wading through LPC assessments and long letters and practical research reports and appt letters and update letters and then meetings, more meetings. It's none stop clinic. It never seems to end. Then it's mid year appraisals. I'm looking forward to it ending. It's the crunch point as with every year at this time. A bit like birth – you have to get to the bit where you don't think you can go on and then you get through it.
20	2 February 2016	Knock knock. Are you busy? Knock, knock. Are you busy? And the look on my face says yes this is the only hour I have to myself today and I'm in the middle of eating my pasta salad. But they still come in and sit down and start asking me questions about training contracts and graduate recruitment schemes. And my face still says 'why are you sitting down? I am still scooping pasta madly into my face because I have 24 minutes until my next meeting'. And they continue. Last week I spent 31 hours on clinic. I am shattered. I want a day off, but nothing seems to be winding down. I truly thought that if I worked all of last week to clear my clinic work I would have a lovely week this week. It hasn't been like that. The list has continued to grow. It's never ending.



Elaine Gregersen
CLINIC FIRST



Elaine Gregersen
conflict between clinic and qoo clinic work



Elaine Gregersen
conflict between clinic and qoo clinic work



Elaine Gregersen
CLINIC FIRST



Elaine Gregersen
CLINIC FIRST



Elaine Gregersen
logistics – time management

		<p>Am I creating work for myself? Yes, that is the case. I'm already thinking about the extra work I need to give to a student so she has something to do in these next 8 weeks. I know she wants to do well so I'm giving her opportunities to do that because she's already been so good and completed work ahead of time. Sometimes I think it's better to have good students, sometimes I think it's a bind. They want more. They need more. They're ambitious. They don't just plod on and have 'gaps' in their workload.</p> <p>--</p> <p>I'm feeling hugely overwhelmed. I've seen students all day. I've had mid year appraisals. I've had meetings. I'm totally doubting the legal advice I'm giving on a case. It's the first time all year I've felt teary. My inbox is full. There's loads of casework to be done and feedback to be given. I'll get through it all, but I'm starting to feel as though I'm back to three firms, with no time for anything else.</p>
21	8 February 2016	<p>Today I am not overwhelmed. My Mid Year Appraisals are all done, my case work is manageable, and I'm working from home in lovely surroundings. It's 35 minutes in and I've already completed feedback on two letters. I have two other full advice letters, an attendance note and two mock documents (interview plan and letter) to check. Obviously other things are going to come in. My stomach just did a flip when I think about another case that's on the move. I'll have a memo to check on that and then an interview plan – that one needs to move quickly so we can give some triage advice. Other casework has turned into mock for the last 8 weeks and the difference is palpable. I'm not constantly thinking about needing to appease a client, or consider what that client is thinking about me as a solicitor. I can concentrate on giving feedback to the student. And that feedback can be light touch – I can let things go. I still don't feel like I'm in control of my cases through. I'm going to do a review of the case files tomorrow when I'm back in the office. At the moment, I couldn't tell you exactly what is happening on each of the cases. It's not in my control, but it is in my control. There are some cases that I know are moving forward at a glacial pace. Am I sad about this? Yes. It's not the service I want to give. Am I going to push to get things out by the end of this week? No, because then I have to do so much more and then find the students more to do. I cannot wait for the 8 weeks to be over. I'm now on countdown.</p>
22	21 February 2016	<p>What I don't understand is how people can fail to think about the students. I want to step in and take on those students. I think about their experience compared to other students. Part of me thinks of sweeping in all heroic and saving them. But this is self indulgent, not my job and certainly not going to give me time to do other things. But what's the point of doing the job if you don't care about what happens to the students? It's all about the teaching. The research you do on the side and you find some time to do that. But the students are what make the university turn. It is an educational institution, not a research project or a CPD factory. I read an article in the Times Higher Education about work life balance for academics. None of the people who wrote about their academic experiences mentioned the students and the joy of teaching. It was all about their lab time, the admin (is that what teaching is for some academics?). It makes me feel sad for the students.</p>

 Elaine Gregeisen
CLINIC FIRST

 Elaine Gregeisen
EMOTIONAL CHANGE WITH CLINIC

 Elaine Gregeisen
logistics – time management

 Elaine Gregeisen
MANY HATS: CHANGE WHEN MOCK WORK

		<p>And then I think about what I need to do to complete my PhD. Will I have to become the thing I despise? Will I be the woman with office hours? Will I take on even fewer cases? Will I make excuses because I'm doing the PhD? Will I start to say no to looking at training contract applications? Will I hide in the library or at home? So much change, and all we can do is take one day at a time and do the job. But what is the job going to be. You don't get any awards or a promotion for looking at training contract applications late at night.</p> <p>[redacted]</p>
23	23 February 2016	<p>It's 2.30pm and I have a headache. I've been in since 7.45 and I haven't stopped. I've just had 5 students in to see me back to back. There was a queue outside the office at one stage. Not all to do with SLO; one about the blog, one about careers advice, rest about cases. One troubles me. He wants a first. I've already said that he isn't at first stage on some of the descriptors. But he keeps pushing: "I want an LPC mock interview too" "You don't need one. I've thought this through. You have two opportunities for interviews. I don't think you're going to fail either but if you do then we'll do a simulated interview. But there's no point in doing it now" "If I write these letters will that get me to where I want to be" "It's not a black and white issue. Each letter isn't graded as such. It's a case of getting to the end of the year, putting in your file and making sure you've done your best quality work". I feel drained; trying to balance encouragement with realism, trying to be firm but not quash spirit, trying to protect myself and yet be an open, approachable supervisor. Days like these make the PhD seem like Mission Impossible.</p>
24	26 February 2016	<p>Am I angry? Well, I guess I am. Maybe I'm more frustrated. Why is this work full of errors? Why am I sitting here rewriting an interview plan when I'm on research leave? It's not as if they've not looked at this topic before – it's exactly the same as the last case! So I'm annoyed that I'm having to correct it. I'm annoyed that I have to re-write the same stuff over and over again. Why not send it back? Well because it's Friday, the interview is on Wednesday and I'm not back in the office until Tuesday. They know that. What they don't know is that my Tuesday is busy and I don't want to spend time faffing on with an interview plan at speed just to get it back to them ready for Wednesday. So I faff on with it now and send it back. But they'll probably not pick it up until Tuesday so why am I bothering? And then I get hit with guilt – what if giving them a similar case was bad for that student? What if they would have thrived on a different case that involved different principles? But then, hang, this is fourth year of a Masters level course. You've already done it, why is it wrong? And then I start thinking about assessment – is this 2:2 standard now? So I feel bad, because they will feel bad. And I would hate to get something bad where there were so many errors pointed out. But then if I had done that standard of work isn't that what I'd be expecting? Do they really give a stuff?</p>
25	11 March 2016	<p>I've thought so much over the past few weeks, so it's annoying that I haven't journaled. I just haven't felt like it to be honest. It swims around my head and sometimes putting it down here makes it come alive, and that makes it more painful, more real. At</p>



Elaine Gregeisen
CLINIC FIRST – NO STOPPING
MANY HATS – OUTSIDE CLINIC









Elaine Gregeisen
CLINIC FIRST; CONFLICT WITH NON CLINIC



Elaine Gregeisen
LACK OF CONTROL



Elaine Gregeisen
MANY HATS

		<p>least in head I can blur the lines a bit. In black and white, you can't escape it. Anyway, last Friday I was on leave to go to a funeral. What possessed me to check my work emails less than an hour before the funeral is something only the deepest darkest parts of my brain know. But I did. And there was an email from a student telling me about a client interview that had taken place that morning. I could see straight away that he was troubled. It hadn't gone as well as expected. The client through a curveball in – new information that changed the advice. Immediately I start looking up the answer. I'm panicked that we will have to do more work. That I will have to do more work. I find a workaround in about 20 minutes. I worry that the student will worry all weekend. So I email them back, tell them not to worry and that I think there's a simple way ahead. All whilst I'm about to go to a funeral and am on leave. Later, that student's friend tells me that the student was worried my email was short and that I was annoyed at him. I laugh. What can you do?</p> <p>I'm annoyed at the client, though. You've known since October we were going to do this work. Why tell us this information now? Why have I bothered? But then of course I start thinking about what I would have done in real life practice. I would have met them asked them loads of questions and probably found this info out right at the start. We didn't do that. We just offered this work as an extra add on, that they probably didn't want in the first place. I fear they're going to tell other people we're rubbish. But I also want rid. We're coming to the end of the year and we've done so much. None of it paid for. Should that matter? Well, it does. Because no one cares how many matters we deal with. We just do it. There isn't a tally. I make a mental note not to agree to do so much next year, and to try to fill gaps with non-live work.</p> <p>Today, I was offered the opportunity to go to another conference. But I've turned it down. I don't want to spend time away from home [redacted] but that's not my main concern. My main concern – and I hate myself for this – is that I feel I should be in the office dealing with client work. If I go, that'll be two weeks away. I feel I need to be here because my students are so slow and I need to be able to turn things round when they arrive, eventually. They have all the time in the world, and I just have whatever is left. We have a window and I get the scraps if they can't manage their time properly.</p>	 Elaine Gregersen CLINIC FIRST	 Elaine Gregersen RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENT	 Elaine Gregersen MANY HATS	 Elaine Gregersen CLINIC FIRST – CONFLICT CLINIC AND NON CLINIC
26	7 April 2016	<p>It's the Spring Break. Nearly all of my cases are coming to an end. I've worked hard to get them into this position. When I think back to the list of letter and PLRs I had to look at, revise, amend, feedback on I feel a sense of relief that it's coming to an end again for another year. I came in this week and straight away put clinic at the forefront of what I was doing, Two plus hours on one advice letter. Sent to the students so they can send it out. Right now, I give little feedback compared to before. I don't see the point in sending them lots of 'you could have done this'. They can see what I've done from the track changes. And it's pointless to send huge swathes of feedback now, weeks before the end. It doesn't serve anyone. And – important point- the client needed that letter. It's been over 6 weeks since the students had contact with the client. One part of me is just gutted. What does that look like? Will we ever get any more clients if we carry on like this? The other part of me says 'that's what they signed up for, free advice by students, and anyway I can't physically make them go faster. I push gently, I send emails, I say agt.</p>	 Elaine Gregersen CLINIC FIRST	 Elaine Gregersen RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENT		

		the end of meetings 'come on now' but if they don't do that then what can I do. And if they have a disability and I know they're struggling with mental health issues, I've got a duty of care. I can't say 'drive up from where you live and sit here until that letter is finished'. That's not my job.
27	12 April 2016	<p>I just want the cases to end and the students to leave. Everyone says the same thing. They're counting down.</p> <p>I feel that I haven't journaled for ages so it's a real surprise when I see that my last entry was only 5 days ago. Yesterday, I had the strongest feeling so far that I wasn't a lawyer anymore. I've spent huge parts of Friday and the weekend immersing myself in my research. And I loved every bit of it. And yesterday I spent 3 hours during work time and 3 hours during the evening (and I had to make myself stop on the evening) doing my AE article. I felt guilty for not spending a whole day doing clinic. I never feel guilty for not doing research. It's a weird phenomenon. I feel guilty that I've got a strong research banding. I feel guilty that I'm loving the research. I have so many ideas for articles I have to strap my brain down and keep pushing the thoughts back. I feel like Patch in Santa Claus the Movie. He had loads of ideas (hmmm, but then it all goes wrong with John Lithgow) and I can hear him saying that from the film over and over again. And I can hear the music pushing on and on and on as the machines go round and round and round.</p> <p>The office is really quiet, but the students continue to barge in. I wonder why they don't heed my requests for appointments or to drop me an email. I said in nicely but plainly in an email. Some don't do it at all. But others knock and then burst into conversation when I'm right in the middle of something. I've got tougher these past few weeks and have said 'I'm in the middle of something, can you come back or can I see you later?'. I've been back in the office two days and already I've seen four students – out of 12. And there's no reason they need to see me face to face. Those students want connection. They want to be seen to be seen. How do I say that they're not helping their cause – in fact they're showing me that they can't be autonomous, that they can't just get on with it. They want the big marks and they think seeing me all the time and being engaged all the time will do that. It will in certain categories of the descriptor but it forces down the others. But there's two weeks left so there's no point in saying this to them now. And actually, haven't I said that face to face and in an email to everyone?</p> <p>The cases are coming to the end but still they can't do the closing procedure right. This I do not understand. I can see straight away that letters are missing and that boxes are not ticked. Why can't they? Or why can't some and not others? Procedural issues plague me. I should just be signing files off to be closed but instead I have to email about forms not being filled in, documents being missing, minor errors that mean I can't sign it off. And then it goes back and then it comes back. Should I just wait until they have gone to do this? And why am I having to remind a pair of students that it's been three weeks since the deadline they gave the client and they should have sent me a closing letter by now. They have 1 case. All they are doing is waiting for a deadline to pass. It has passed. Why is it so hard to plan ahead, to realise something needs to be done? Do I send the email? Or do I remind them in firm meeting? Or do I wait for them to realise? I want the file closed. Client care and correct</p>

 Elaine Gregersen
CLINIC FIRST

 Elaine Gregersen
RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS

 Elaine Gregersen
LACK OF CONTROL

		procedure means the file needs to be closed. Argh! So much time and effort into something I would have done in 2 minutes if it was just me dealing. I'm ready for them to leave now. 12 working days to go.
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Appendix 3

Extracts from my diary mapped against relevant themes/sub-themes

FINAL THEMES AND SUB-THEMES AND DIARY EXTRACTS

THEME	DIARY EXTRACT	
Multifaceted relationship with students	<i>As a teacher</i>	<p>Why have you done this? Why don't you seem to care? Is it me – am I too not 'scary' enough? Did I, in some way, gives signs that it wouldn't be a bother if you didn't do things the right way. <i>Should I have taken you to task a few weeks ago when I suspected that you were not pulling your wright, and that others through their deeds and words were suggesting that they were annoyed by this? I wanted to give you time to bed in, and to prove that you could pull it together. Maybe you just needed time. Maybe when things got going, it would bring it to life and the immediacy of giving real legal advice to real people would sink in</i> [11 November 2015]</p> <p><i>I feel drained; trying to balance encouragement with realism, trying to be firm but not quash spirit, trying to protect myself and yet be an open, approachable supervisor</i> [23 February 2016]</p>
	<i>As a lawyer</i>	<p>Ever felt sick to your stomach? I get a wave of sickness in my stomach when students email about client queries. <i>I know that the best thing for the client is for me to pick up the phone and give them the advice. I can answer those points quickly and easily. But</i></p>

		<p><i>my students can't. They need time. What if the client doesn't appear to realise that? What if they see them as a free service where they can keep asking and asking? I'm stuck between two worlds. I'm a lawyer. I'm a good lawyer. And I can tell the client what they need to know within minutes. But I also have to protect the students. They don't know the answers. They need time to find the answers and then relay them. This can take weeks. So what sort of service am I/we giving the client. What will this client think of me? Do I push them away? I'm not going to pick up the phone and provide the advice. But if I don't do that, they might become dissatisfied with the service. Our reputation will suffer. My reputation will suffer [4 December 2015]</i></p> <p><i>I have had this conversation with you for the past 6 hours. Over and over in my head I go through what I'm going to say and how I'm going to say it. I want to impress how serious a breach of procedure is. It's threefold. It affects me as it's my practising certificate you work under. I am responsible for your actions. It affects the client. You have breached our policies – what would that client think about you and the SLO? And it affects you. Because this is part of your assessment. It will inevitably affect your grade. And I want to say that I will have no hesitation to take you away from live clients if I think I/the client/the clinic is compromised [11 November 2015]</i></p> <p><i>Why did you do it? What is happening behind the scenes? Why could you not come in the office, which is open 9-5 every day? Is there something wrong? So I am torn. I want to be furious. I am furious. As a professional I want you to pull your socks up,</i></p>
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		<i>acknowledge the seriousness of your actions and show some maturity and professionalism [11 November 2015]</i>
	<i>As a colleague</i>	<i>I query whether I have bonded with my students. This is the first year that I don't really feel that connection. It may be because we have been together for such a short period of time. I'm sure that it's been like this in previous years but I don't remember meetings being this painful. One group in particular are quiet and there are big personalities in that group. It's interesting to think about why this connection or bond is so important to me. Much like colleagues we are forced together. Much like colleagues I want us to "get on". Like when you share an office with someone, you find a way of working together, you talk about personal matters, you talk about work, you gossip and share and help each other to navigate the academic world. Is this what clinic replicates? Or is it a maternal connection? These are my students. My bunch of 12. My firms. I want them to do well. I want them to succeed. They drive me mad, but I can see the person behind the student and they're not bad people. They're just learning. And I know that at the end of the year I want them to look back at this as the best experience they've had. I do it for them [11 November 2015]</i>
	<i>As a mentor</i>	<i>Then I think about the student, trying to juggle life, other modules, family issues. I think about how I don't know where they live. Did they have to travel far to come in? Are they unwell with all the bugs going around? I think about how I would feel if I were sat at home and received an email from my supervisor saying that things were happening on the case. I think about the students with disability statements. Will this urgency, this</i>

		<p><i>need to be flexible, impact on their health? Will they give up now before we've begun because the stress is too much?</i> [22 October 2015]</p> <p>These are my students. <i>My bunch of 12. My firms. I want them to do well. I want them to succeed.</i> They drive me mad, but I can see the person behind the student and they're not bad people. They're just learning. And I know that at the end of the year I want them to look back at this as the best experience they've had. I do it for them [11 November 2015]</p> <p>Knock knock. Are you busy? Knock, knock. Are you busy? And the look on my face says yes this is the only hour I have to myself today and I'm in the middle of eating my pasta salad. <i>But they still come in and sit down and start asking me questions about training contracts and graduate recruitment schemes.</i> And my face still says 'why are you sitting down? I am still scooping pasta madly into my face because I have 24 minutes until my next meeting'. And they continue. Last week I spent 31 hours on clinic. I am shattered. I want a day off, but nothing seems to be winding down. I truly thought that if I worked all of last week to clear my clinic work I would have a lovely week this week. It hasn't been like that. The list has continued to grow. It's never ending [2 February 2016]</p> <p>It's 2.30pm and I have a headache. I've been in since 7.45 and I haven't stopped. I've just had 5 students in to see me back to back. There was a queue outside the office at one stage. <i>Not all to do with SLO; one about the blog, one about careers advice, rest about cases</i> [23 February 2016]</p>
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		<p><i>I worry that the student will worry all weekend. So I email them back, tell them not to worry and that I think there's a simple way ahead . All whilst I'm about to go to a funeral and am on leave. Later, that student's friend tells me that the student was worried my email was short and that I was annoyed at him. I laugh. What can you do? [11 March 2016]</i></p> <p><i>Why do I drop everything to come to a student's aid? Here I am, working from home, huge list of admin and research to do. But I check my email and see two worried emails from students following a client interview and I drop everything to write an email to both giving comfort and guidance. I tried to carry out with what I was doing. But all I could see was their little faces. I could hear them stressing to each other. It's like an itch you have to scratch [4 December 2015]</i></p> <p><i>I want to be furious. I am furious. As a professional I want you to pull your socks up, acknowledge the seriousness of your actions and show some maturity and professionalism. As a teacher, I know that education is about making mistakes and moving on from that. I also know that you are a human being with a life outside of my one module. I do not want to make your life difficult. I only want to help. I do not want you to fail. I want you to succeed. Please succeed [11 November 2015]</i></p>
	<i>All four branches – teacher, lawyer, colleague, and mentor</i>	<p><i>As a teacher, I know that education is about making mistakes and moving on from that. I also know that you are a human being with a life outside of my one module. I do not want to make your life difficult. I only want to help. I do not want you to fail. I want you</i></p>

		<p>to succeed. Please succeed. <i>As a solicitor</i>, I just want the work to be done. I want to draft the document that you have been working on (or not) for 2 weeks and just get it out to the client. As a researcher, I sigh thinking about all of the time that I have spent this afternoon – the Weds afternoon I keep free, where I am not available – dealing with this, and other panicking students, and client emails and practical legal research reports. I don't resent it. I could have turned off my email and thought about all of that another day. But the research comes last. Providing a service to the students and the clients is always there [11 November 2015]</p> <p>Running around, back and forward down the corridor. Trying to sort. Attempting to sort. <i>Being an authority figure, a source of guidance. Eyes appealing to me: "what do we do next?" "what are the next steps?" "give us some reassurance" "make us feel calm and confident" "make it all okay"</i>. That's been my morning. Complete immersion in the clinic [24 November 2015]</p> <p>Three hours on two documents for the same student. I'm so frustrated but yet trying to find supportive words. The work is poor. It's probably the poorest I've seen in 5 years. I have spent three hours reviewing and providing feedback. I've read the feedback out to a colleague to check it's balanced. I don't want to crush the student, but I also want to make them aware that the work is poor. Partly because I want to protect myself if I end up giving a poor mark. Partly because it has to be said and I wonder about the quality of our graduates. I think about my time as a student – would have been dedicated to SLO? Would I have produced work of this quality? I don't want to 'lose'</p>
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		<p>this student. I have to work with them for the rest of the year. And they're not 'bad'. But I have to tell the truth. <i>On a day like this I feel that I'm stuck in between being someone's mentor and their boss</i> [24 November 2015]</p> <p>Thinking back to yesterday, I wanted my entry to say that I'd spent three whole days doing no substantive clinic work. I looked at emails as they came and noted that things needed doing, but it wasn't until I received an email about a problem sending a letter out that I actually physically did something. I feel very conflicted about how much I enjoy time away from the clinic. I loved the three days talking about doing the PhD. I loved talking about autoethnography and what it means to me. I loved thinking of answers to difficult questions. I loved the sense of community we have established in the DLaw group. But I felt guilty that I hadn't responded to students when they had emailed me work to thank them for that work. I'm also struggling to motivate myself to do my clinic work. It feels hard, heavy and a weight around my neck. I feel that it takes so long. I have to set aside time to do it otherwise I will miss something. I missed something on one case and now I'm having to put it right. If I had gone into the interview then I would have had the knowledge to answer the question the client asked. But it took so long to get the students to a stage where they were even near the right answer to the central question, I didn't work with them on the peripheral points that could come up. Of course, the client then naturally clung onto a peripheral point and now I'm having to go back into the advice letter and add this work in. <i>Then I feel guilty for not raising this with the student who has written the letter. I'm not trying to find the</i></p>
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		<p>words to say ‘I missed this’ without saying I missed it but at the same time not make her feel that she’s done something wrong, although I’m also thinking ‘you should have’ (‘should have’ ‘could have’?) picked this up. Then I worry about the client. What sort of service are they getting? Then I worry about me. How many times will I need to see this letter before it can go out? I will spend hours on that first draft letter. I will amend it and add comments. Then I will complete a form for LPC assessment to say whether it is competent or not. Then the student will amend it. Then I will look at it again and give more feedback. I will probably need to change it. Sometimes I just want to put all of my experience, and the nuance, of advising into their heads [18 December 2015]</p> <p>It was the first time I’ve ever felt that I couldn’t put a student in front of a client. And I’ve had some students who have really struggled before. In the past I’ve had students who have failed other modules but I’ve worked hard with them and seen them through SLO. They might have had a few NYCs in the competency assessments but I’ve never though “god, I can’t risk this student being near a client”. <i>Who am I trying to save?</i> I’m trying to save the student – I don’t want them to fail. I don’t want them to fail for selfish reasons – I don’t want them back as a resit. I don’t want them to fail because it’s just a waste. I want to save the client. I don’t want the client to have to sit through an awful interview. I don’t want them to do something that I wouldn’t have advised them to do. I want to save me. I want my reputation to be kept in tact. I don’t want the client running to tell all of their networks how poor the students at that SLO are. I’m proud that I’m a good lawyer. I have always worked hard for my clients. I give good advice. I</p>
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		<p>don't want a student to ruin that. I don't want former colleagues laughing at me and my dumbed down legal advice, my failing students and my bad clinic [13 January 2016]</p> <p>And it's pointless to send huge swathes of feedback now, weeks before the end. It doesn't serve anyone. And – important point- the client needed that letter. It's been over 6 weeks since the students had contact with the client. <i>One part of me is just gutted. What does that look like? Will we ever get any more clients if we carry on like this? The other part of me says 'that's what they signed up for, free advice by students, and anyway I can't physically make them go faster.</i> I push gently, I send emails, I say agt the end of meetings 'come on now' but if they don't do that then what can I do. And if they have a disability and I know they're struggling with mental health issues, I've got a duty of care. I can't say 'drive up from where you live and sit here until that letter is finished'. That's not my job [7 April 2016]</p>
Conflict between student needs and client needs	<p>Kicking myself for a rubbish firm meeting. Have so many teaching ideas and then I just do a sit and chat. Tomorrow's meeting will be so much better but is that fair to the students today? And what do I do with them next week? Why didn't I just do what I wanted to do? Because I didn't have a board marker? Because it was easier? Probably because I had been so held up and not prepared at all, even though I was prepared 2 weeks ago. <i>Feel like a bad teacher. If I had given the enquiry out – would that have enthused them more? Now I am stuck with a first come first served system. I could have given the enquiry out and then spread out the work between the firm. But then would a client want to come in for three different advice interviews. Or would it be fair to the ones who did get an advice interview and those who didn't?</i> [7 October 2015]</p>	

	<p>The Winter Break. Each year, students are told that their term ends on a certain date. This is usually two weeks before our office shuts for a few days. <i>So what do you do when your students want to go home, or on holiday? The only question that came up in the firm meeting. That feeling of dread and inevitability that this is going to creep back up on you. And then the weekend email saying that they're going away before the break. Is that ok? Well, not really. A sickening feeling. An angry feeling. Is it taken seriously? Is the role – advising a real client – understood? What does it mean? What are you thinking?</i> [11 October 2015]</p>	
Clinic comes first	<p><i>Clinic comes before research</i></p>	<p><i>The struggle to balance supervision with research:</i> I want to take Fridays to do research. My students know I'm not available on Fridays. But now a client is coming in in 2 days and I am panicked. Will my students be able to turn the plan around in time. If I get it on Monday when am I going to look at it? I'm already scheduling work over the weekend to make space on Monday for this. But then they might not get it to me by Monday. Tuesday is hell, one meeting after another, and a late night when I'm taking students to an event. I haven't even started looking at my conference paper for next week [22 October 2015]</p> <p><i>I want to do clinic work all day. I want to down tools and start going through my table of clinic work and see what is to be done and when. But that's not what my workload says I should be doing. Really, I should be finishing my PhD Proposal, sorting out research administration, asking to be a reviewer of another journal, completing an application for an award, updating the eLP, writing that article on autoethnography. But I'm not. Today, I'm going to review three legal documents (website terms of use, privacy policy and cookie policy). I'm going to have a meeting with my students to explore each of</i></p>

		<p><i>those documents, give guidance on the structure and content of their interview advising the client on that document, give reassurance that everything is going well and take a peek into the future and plan out a strategy for what happens if this or that occurs. I'm also going to review and give feedback on an 8 page legal research report and organise a meeting to discuss that document and what lies ahead. I'll chase another student for work that has not arrived by the deadline. I'll review and give feedback on a letter. I'll review and give feedback on another letter. And, I'll fit in some of the other things that my workload says that I should be doing as and when I can. I'll also deal with students popping in and seeing me throughout the course of the day, or stopping me in the office</i> [23 November 2015]</p> <p><i>I get to my desk at 9am. I start reading about theoretical perspectives. I want to update the DLaw group with book & article recommendations. But the list of clinic documents is piling up. Letters, research reports, interview plans. The pull of this work is too much. I feel this must be where my attentions lie</i> [26 November 2015]</p> <p>Ever felt sick to your stomach? I get a wave of sickness in my stomach when students email about client queries. I know that the best thing for the client is for me to pick up the phone and give them the advice. I can answer those points quickly and easily. But my students can't. They need time. What if the client doesn't appear to realise that? What if they see them as a free service where they can keep asking and asking? I'm stuck between two worlds. I'm a lawyer. I'm a good lawyer. And I can tell the client what they need to know within minutes. But I also have to protect the students. They</p>
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		<p>don't know the answers. They need time to find the answers and then relay them. This can take weeks. So what sort of service am I/we giving the client. What will this client think of me? Do I push them away? I'm not going to pick up the phone and provide the advice. But if I don't do that, they might become dissatisfied with the service. Our reputation will suffer. My reputation will suffer. <i>All of this on a Friday, when I'm meant to be researching.</i> And I still feel sick [4 December 2015]</p> <p>Thinking back to yesterday, I wanted my entry to say that I'd spent three whole days doing no substantive clinic work. I looked at emails as they came and noted that things needed doing, but it wasn't until I received an email about a problem sending a letter out that I actually physically did something. <i>I feel very conflicted about how much I enjoy time away from the clinic. I loved the three days talking about doing the PhD. I loved talking about autoethnography and what it means to me.</i> I loved thinking of answers to difficult questions. I loved the sense of community we have established in the DLaw group. But I felt guilty that I hadn't responded to students when they had emailed me work to thank them for that work. I'm also struggling to motivate myself to do my clinic work. It feels hard, heavy and a weight around my neck. I feel that it takes so long. I have to set aside time to do it otherwise I will miss something [18 December 2015]</p> <p>Hugely lacking motivation today. I've just spent 2 hours 'writing' an article but I don't feel I've really done any writing, Granted, I've sorted out a structural issue but, honestly, I can normally write a whole piece in this sort of time. <i>I'm distracted by clinic work but I don't want to do that either. It's a bit like being pulled between two worlds</i></p>
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		<p><i>and then giving up and doing neither.</i> I don't have a plan and I think that's the problem. I thought I'd do this article today, but then there's been an issue with students putting confidential waste in a non-confidential waste bin and I've now got case work upon case work piling up in my inbox. Can it wait until Monday? Yes. Does that mean I'll have a whole day of clinic work on Monday – yes, but that happens anyway so might as well do it all at once. I wouldn't do any research then anyway – there's no peace and quiet and I need to get things done so I can have a weds afternoon 'off' clinic. I wonder what others do. Would they just do a few jobs and not be worried about it? I'm always trying to make the most of my time. Maybe I should chill out and not worry about a 'dodgy' day [22 January 2016]</p> <p><i>Am I angry? Well, I guess I am. Maybe I'm more frustrated. Why is this work full of errors? Why am I sitting here rewriting an interview plan when I'm on research leave?</i> It's not as if they've not looked at this topic before – it's exactly the same as the last case! So I'm annoyed that I'm having to correct it. I'm annoyed that I have to re-write the same stuff over and over again. Why not send it back? Well because it's Friday, the interview is on Wednesday and I'm not back in the office until Tuesday. They know that. What they don't know is that my Tuesday is busy and I don't want to spend time faffing on with an interview plan at speed just to get it back to them ready for Wednesday. So I faff on with it now and send it back. But they'll probably not pick it up until Tuesday so why am I bothering? And then I get hit with guilt – what if giving them a similar case was bad for that student? What if they would have thrived on a different case that</p>
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		<p>involved different principles? But then, hang, this is fourth year of a Masters level course. You've already done it, why is it wrong? And then I start thinking about assessment – is this 2:2 standard now? So I feel bad, because they will feel bad. And I would hate to get something bad where there were so many errors pointed out. But then if I had done that standard of work isn't that what I'd be expecting? Do they really give a stuff? [26 February 2016]</p> <p><i>Today, I was offered the opportunity to go to another conference. But I've turned it down. I don't want to spend time away from home (M's due to go to U for two weeks soon and we've got a big trip coming up that weekend) but that's not my main concern. My main concern – and I hate myself for this – is that I feel I should be in the office dealing with client work. If I go, that'll be two weeks away. I feel I need to be here because my students are so slow and I need to be able to turn things round when they arrive, eventually. They have all the time in the world, and I just have whatever is left. We have a window and I get the scraps if they can't manage their time properly [11 March 2016]</i></p> <p>I feel that I haven't journaled for ages so it's a real surprise when I see that my last entry was only 5 days ago. Yesterday, I had the strongest feeling so far that I wasn't a lawyer anymore. I've spent huge parts of Friday and the weekend immersing myself in my research. And I loved every bit of it. <i>And yesterday I spent 3 hours during work time and 3 hours during the evening (and I had to make myself stop on the evening) doing my AE</i></p>
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	<p>Constant stream of clinic work</p>	<p>I have now spent hours thinking about this student, writing emails, giving feedback, protecting myself by writing things down, protecting myself by having meetings with her and with the director. I now have an email from another student – a conscientious student – who wants to see me. But I'm exhausted. I've had meetings all morning and now I want to catch up. And so I feel guilty ignoring that conscientious student. It's meant to be my afternoon away from clinic. Do I email her back and say yes of course pop in and see me or do I push her back? [13 January 2016]</p> <p>There's just documents flooding my inbox. I'm working through them methodically – which is the most pressing, which can wait – but they arrive over and over again. Now we have a new client that I could help on the phone now. I could sort it all out now. But I'm wading through LPC assessments and long letters and practical research reports and appt letters and update letters and then meetings, more meetings. <i>It's none stop clinic. It never seems to end</i> [25 January 2016]</p> <p>I'm feeling hugely overwhelmed. I've seen students all day. I've had mid year appraisals. I've had meetings. I'm totally doubting the legal advice I'm giving on a case. It's the first time all year I've felt teary. <i>My inbox is full. There's loads of casework to be done and feedback to be given. I'll get through it all, but I'm starting to feel as though I'm back to three firms, with no time for anything else</i> [2 February 2016]</p>

		<p>It's 2.30pm and I have a headache. <i>I've been in since 7.45 and I haven't stopped. I've just had 5 students in to see me back to back.</i> There was a queue outside the office at one stage. Not all to do with SLO; one about the blog, one about careers advice, rest about cases [23 February 2016]</p> <p><i>When I think back to the list of letter and PLRs I had to look at, revise, amend, feedback on I feel a sense of relief that it's coming to an end again for another year.</i> I came in this week and straight away put clinic at the forefront of what I was doing, Two plus hours on one advice letter. Sent to the students so they can send it out [7 April 2016]</p> <p><i>The office is really quiet, but the students continue to barge in. I wonder why they don't heed my requests for appointments or to drop me an email. I said in nicely but plainly in an email. Some don't do it at all. But others knock and then burst into conversation when I'm right in the middle of something. I've got tougher these past few weeks and have said 'I'm in the middle of something, can you come back or can I see you later?'. I've been back in the office two days and already I've seen four students – out of 12. And there's no reason they need to see me face to face. Those students want connection. They want to be seen to be seen</i> [12 April 2016]</p>
	Being on call	<p><i>Running around, back and forward down the corridor. Trying to sort. Attempting to sort. Being an authority figure, a source of guidance. Eyes appealing to me: "what do we do next?" "what are the next steps?" "give us some reassurance" "make us feel calm and</i></p>

		<p><i>confident” “make it all okay”. That’s been my morning. Complete immersion in the clinic [24 November 2015]</i></p> <p><i>Today I am a bad supervisor. I wanted to come in a little later than usual. I wanted a bit of a rest, especially as I knew I would be working late tonight. I wandered through the revolving doors at 9.30am. I saw my students. They shouldn’t have been there. Their client was late. There wouldn’t be any free rooms left if she didn’t turn up soon. Bag still in hand, coat still on I calmed them down and ran up the stairs to sort out rooms. I couldn’t even set up my computer properly – all morning it was one thing after another. Could the meeting be changed? When could the students do it? When could the client do it? Knock, knock. Knock, knock. Constant stream of students through my door all wanting a piece of me. I walked through the SLO. More meetings, more discussions. Constant stream of supervisory, calming, positive words. Is everyone ok? How are you feeling about it? Don’t worry. Don’t worry. Let’s think about next steps. This is what I’d like you to next. Don’t worry about it. Knock, knock. Knock, knock. Torn in so many different directions [3 December 2015]</i></p> <p><i>Why do I drop everything to come to a student’s aid? Here I am, working from home, huge list of admin and research to do. But I check my email and see two worried emails from students following a client interview and I drop everything to write an email to both giving comfort and guidance. I tried to carry out with what I was doing. But all I could see was their little faces. I could hear them stressing to each other. It’s like an</i></p>
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		<p>itch you have to scratch. Part of me thought about ringing the office and speaking to them, to make them feel better. What on earth?! [4 December 2015]</p> <p><i>Knock knock. Are you busy? Knock, knock. Are you busy? And the look on my face says yes this is the only hour I have to myself today and I'm in the middle of eating my pasta salad. But they still come in and sit down and start asking me questions about training contracts and graduate recruitment schemes. And my face still says 'why are you sitting down? I am still scooping pasta madly into my face because I have 24 minutes until my next meeting'. And they continue. Last week I spent 31 hours on clinic. I am shattered. I want a day off, but nothing seems to be winding down. I truly thought that if I worked all of last week to clear my clinic work I would have a lovely week this week. It hasn't been like that. The list has continued to grow. It's never ending</i> [2 February 2016]</p> <p>Anyway, last Friday I was on leave to go to a funeral. What possessed me to check my work emails less than an hour before the funeral is something only the deepest darkest parts of my brain know. But I did. And there was an email from a student telling me about a client interview that had taken place that morning. I could see straight away that he was troubled. It hadn't gone as well as expected. The client through a curveball in – new information that changed the advice. Immediately I start looking up the answer. I'm panicked that we will have to do more work. That I will have to do more work. I find a workaround in about 20 minutes. I worry that the student will worry all weekend. <i>So I email them back, tell them not to worry and that I think there's a simple way ahead. All whilst I'm about to go to a funeral and am on leave.</i> Later, that student's</p>
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		<p>friend tells me that the student was worried my email was short and that I was annoyed at him. I laugh. What can you do? [11 March 2016]</p> <p>Today, I was offered the opportunity to go to another conference. But I've turned it down. I don't want to spend time away from home (M's due to go to U for two weeks soon and we've got a big trip coming up that weekend) but that's not my main concern. <i>My main concern – and I hate myself for this – is that I feel I should be in the office dealing with client work. If I go, that'll be two weeks away.</i> I feel I need to be here because my students are so slow and I need to be able to turn things round when they arrive, eventually. They have all the time in the world, and I just have whatever is left. We have a window and I get the scraps if they can't manage their time properly [11 March 2016]</p>
Chasing students to progress casework	<p>Then the low is the <i>constant need to push things on, to chase, to focus students' minds on the reality of live client work.</i> Is it okay not to come in to the office? On the one hand, how is a student meant to know that something will kick off? We can't expect them to sit in the office all day, waiting, or even in uni all day, on the off chance that 'something' will happen? But what if something does happen? What if we need to move things along at speed? What if things are moving along at speed and they're not there? Is it okay to ask those students to come in to the office? This is my struggle. I want them to come in. To deal with it [22 October 2015]</p> <p>Fuming. The movement from fume to not so fume. But still fuming beneath the surface and <i>sense of panic and having no control over your own time management.</i> <i>What do you do when someone is working on a completely different timescale to your own?</i> It has been a week since I asked for a document to be sent out. It has not been sent out. It has</p>	

	<p>remained in the inbox, not doing anything. I raced to check that email and return feedback before I left to go to my conference. I did that because I want to be a good supervisor. I don't want to leave students hanging, waiting for me to help them progress their work. I felt good that I had worked hard to get the feedback back to them. They could then send it out. But it remained in the inbox. And when I have asked why it hasn't been sent out, I am met with confusion – “well, we thought you wouldn't be able to look at it until you came back from the conference” “well, you said it didn't need to go out until next Thursday”. But I said in the email “here you go, please send it out”. Is there any way I can be clearer? I want to be petulant and say how I worked really hard to get that document back to them so that they could move on, so I was a good supervisor. But it sounds childish. So I don't say it. I say that I'm concerned for them. I want them to do well. And they can't do well if the case isn't progressing. They leave and I am still fuming under the surface. <i>I have no control. I am dancing to their tune.</i> Should I have gone to the conference and done the work when I got back? Would they have cared? Noticed? Now we are all not very happy with each other [4 November 2015]</p> <p>Making myself journal. Bit miserable to be honest. <i>It's been one thing after another today with the same theme: chasing students.</i> I do not understand how they don't get that it's just professional courtesy to call or write to a client to let them know you haven't forgotten about them . <i>I swear that if I wasn't pushing them, they'd never get to the point where they got the client back in to advise them.</i> And of course I'm tarring everyone with the same brush. Some do think ahead. They send me letters before I've thought to ask them to write. They draft update emails right on cue. Am I too soft? Should I just give them deadlines and be done with it. But I want them to be able to show that they can be autonomous, responsible individuals. I want to give them that opportunity. I wonder if they want it though. Or would they sigh in relief if I just said “we're going to do some simulated work, and here are some deadlines for getting back to me”. <i>It's tiring. Not physically. Just emotionally. I'm sick of feeling like I'm behind. I'm sick of chasing</i> [14 January 2016]</p>
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	<p>The cases are coming to the end but still they can't do the closing procedure right. This I do not understand. I can see straight away that letters are missing and that boxes are not ticked. Why can't they? Or why can't some and not others? Procedural issues plague me. I should just be signing files off to be closed but instead I have to email about forms not being filled in, documents being missing, minor errors that mean I can't sign it off. And then it goes back and then it comes back. Should I just wait until they have gone to do this? And why am I having to remind a pair of students that it's been three weeks since the deadline they gave the client and they should have sent me a closing letter by now. They have 1 case. All they are doing is waiting for a deadline to pass. It has passed. <i>Why is it so hard to plan ahead, to realise something needs to be done?</i> Do I send the email? Or do I remind them in firm meeting? Or do I wait for them to realise? I want the file closed. Client care and correct procedure means the file needs to be closed. Argh! So much time and effort into something I would have done in 2 minutes if it was just me dealing. I'm ready for them to leave now. 12 working days to go [12 April 2016]</p>
Student impact on my time management	<p>Am I angry? Well, I guess I am. Maybe I'm more frustrated. Why is this work full of errors? Why am I sitting here rewriting an interview plan when I'm on research leave? It's not as if they've not looked at this topic before – it's exactly the same as the last case! <i>So I'm annoyed that I'm having to correct it. I'm annoyed that I have to re-write the same stuff over and over again. Why not send it back? Well because it's Friday, the interview is on Wednesday and I'm not back in the office until Tuesday. They know that. What they don't know is that my Tuesday is busy and I don't want to spend time faffing on with an interview plan at speed just to get it back to them ready for Wednesday. So I faff on with it now and send it back. But they'll probably not pick it up until Tuesday so why am I bothering?</i> And then I get hit with guilt – what if giving them a similar case was bad for that student? What if they would have thrived on a different case that involved different principles? But then, hang, this is fourth year of a Masters level course. You've already done it, why is it wrong? And then I start thinking about assessment – is this 2:2 standard now? So I feel bad, because they</p>

	<p>will feel bad. And I would hate to get something bad where there were so many errors pointed out. But then if I had done that standard of work isn't that what I'd be expecting? Do they really give a stuff? [26 February 2016]</p> <p>Today, I was offered the opportunity to go to another conference. But I've turned it down. I don't want to spend time away from home (M's due to go to U for two weeks soon and we've got a big trip coming up that weekend) but that's not my main concern. <i>My main concern – and I hate myself for this – is that I feel I should be in the office dealing with client work. If I go, that'll be two weeks away. I feel I need to be here because my students are so slow and I need to be able to turn things round when they arrive, eventually. They have all the time in the world, and I just have whatever is left. We have a window and I get the scraps if they can't manage their time properly</i> [11 March 2016]</p>
Immediate impact of clinic work on emotional state	<p>Recurring headache [22 October 2015; 23 February 2016], dread [11 October 2015; 4 January 2016], irritation [11 October 2015], sickening feeling [4 December 2015], gnawing away [11 October 2015], worry [11 October 2015; 18 December 2015; 5 January 2016; 22 January 2016; 11 March 2016], gnawing worry [11 October 2015], determined [5 January 2016], anger [11 October 2015; 26 February 2016], frustrated [24 November 2015; 26 February 2016], anxiety [4 January 2016; 13 January 2016], fear [4 January 2016; 21 January 2016], fuming [4 November 2015], furious [11 November 2015], panic [4 November 2015], overwhelmed [2 February 2016], gutted [7 April 2016], guilt [18 December 2015; 13 January 2016; 26 February 2016; 12 April 2016]</p>
Residual emotional impact of clinical work	<p>Why does this keep popping up in my head in moments of silence when walking around town. Why, a day later is this still there. Gnawing away. I think of the stress if the client wants or needs to come in for advice during the weeks they are away. I think of my role – responsibility to the client, responsibility to the student. I think of the student. Other things in their life. Family commitments [11 October 2015]</p>

	<p>I walk around town for half an hour and when I return to my desk it's late afternoon and nothing has happened. Eventually things get sorted - a student comes in. But then I'm the one sitting in my office at 5.30pm with a bad back and headache, feeling like I've been from one thing to another constantly 'runaway train-ing'. I love my job. I hate my job [22 October 2015]</p> <p>Why don't you seem to care? Is it me – am I too not 'scary' enough? Did I, in some way, gives signs that it wouldn't be a bother if you didn't do things the right way. Should I have taken you to task a few weeks ago when I suspected that you were not pulling your wright, and that others through their deeds and words were suggesting that they were annoyed by this? I wanted to give you time to bed in, and to prove that you could pull it together. Maybe you just needed time. Maybe when things got going, it would bring it to life and the immediacy of giving real legal advice to real people would sink in.</p> <p>I have had this conversation with you for the past 6 hours. Over and over in my head I go through what I'm going to say and how I'm going to say it. I want to impress how serious a breach of procedure is. It's threefold. It affects me as it's my practising certificate you work under. I am responsible for your actions. It affects the client. You have breached our policies – what would that client think about you and the SLO? And it affects you. Because this is part of your assessment. It will inevitably affect your grade. And I want to say that I will have no hesitation to take you away from live clients if I think I/the client/the clinic is compromised [11 November 2015]</p>
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Appendix 4
Original Ethical Issues Form



Faculty of Business and Law

Staff Research and Consultancy

Ethical Issues Form

Staff Name:	Elaine Campbell
Department:	Law
Title of Research / Consultancy Project:	A Year in the Life: an autoethnographic exploration of the working life of a clinical supervisor
Please categorise your research as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning & Pedagogical • Discipline based • Contribution to practice • A multiple of the above 	Learning & Pedagogical Contribution to practice
Start Date of Research / Consultancy project:	29 September 2015

	Comments
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<p>Brief description of the proposed research methods including, in particular, whether human subjects will be involved and how.</p>	<p>I have recently been accepted on to the DLaw programme. My initial (to be refined) research question is: what can an autoethnographic approach reveal about the life and identity of a clinical supervisor?</p> <p>Autoethnography (AE) is a qualitative research methodology where the researcher examines social and cultural context, but through their own personal experience. It is reflexive research which allows the researcher to explore their lived experience and analyse, in depth, the way their phenomenon exists within a broader socio-cultural narrative.</p> <p>In order to move forward with my research, I need to trial the way that I collect autoethnographic data.</p> <p>I will be the research participant, as it is my story. However, I am not blind to issues of relational ethics. I have provided more detail about my thoughts on this issue below.</p>
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<p>1. How will informed consent of research participants be acquired?</p> <p>(If appropriate attach draft informed consent form)</p>	<p>I have given a great deal of thought to this section.</p> <p>There is an ongoing debate on the ethical nature of AE. Kip Jones (2007) asserts that AE can be used to 'sidestep' ethical issues associated with using research participants. This is because the researcher is using their own story. The only participant is the researcher and she clearly gives her consent – so problem solved.</p> <p>In my view the only issue that Jones is sidestepping is the fact that AE by its very nature will include reference to other humans. Even if I was going to write my journal entries on a desert island, with no other human contact, I would inevitably end up reflecting on persons known and their impact on my life.</p> <p>This raises the dilemma: how will I deal with unavoidable truth that I may refer to students, staff, family members and strangers in my journal? Does everyone I come into contact with from 29th September 2015 need to (a) be informed that I am conducting autoethnographic research and (b) need to sign a form to say they are happy for me consider our interactions in my journal?</p> <p>Scheper-Hughes (2000) states that there is no 'politically correct' way of conducting ethnography. It has to be viewed on a case by case basis, with the context of the research in mind. With my project, I am not researching staff, students etc. I am researching my own behaviours and identity. I will not be reflecting on any personal, non-work related conversations that I have with colleagues. I understand that by collecting data on my own story, I have a responsibility to others who implicitly become part of the narrative. I do not think that it is appropriate (or possible) to tell everyone I come into contact with during the course of the year that I am engaging in this research or ask them to sign a form. I will be anonymising any reference to a person other than myself in my journal entries. With all of this in mind, I have not attached a draft informed consent form, but would welcome the panel's opinion on this issue. I have read widely on this issue and from what I can see the majority of autoethnographic work is undertaken with little (if any) consideration of ethical issues. I do not want to do this which is why I have provided this narrative.</p> <p>Kip Jones, "How Did I Get to Princess Margaret? (And How Did I Get Her to the World Wide Web?)" (2007) Forum: Qualitative Social Research 8(3) Art 3</p> <p>N. Scheper-Hughes, 'Ire in Ireland' (2000) Ethnography 1(1) 117</p>
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<p>2. How will research data be collected, securely stored and anonymity protected (where this is required)</p>	<p>My intention is to collect two types of data during the next academic year:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time spent on clinical supervision: Clinicians regularly complain that the amount of time spent on supervision is not reflected by institutional workloads, but it can be difficult to put into words exactly how that supervision manifests itself. As that time is not recorded, we say (rather weakly) that we "do a lot" of supervision. Quantitative data of this nature is rare. 2. Narrative about clinical supervision: This will help build up a story of issues, events, feelings and behaviours that occur during my working life as a clinical supervisor. <p>Data on time spent will be collected using a paper based diary (known as the Passion Planner – which I have already purchased). This diary is set out in a way that allows for detailed notes on time spent on different activities. I trialled this earlier this year using free PP sheets (http://www.passionplanner.com/use-it-for-free/). The diary will be kept in a locked desk at work.</p> <p>Other narrative data will be collected using electronic means. As noted above, I am trialling this method. My intention is to write electronic notes throughout the day where I can. I will use Scrivener which is linked to a password protected Dropbox account that I can access using all of my electronic devices (they are all password protected). The Law School kindly purchased Scrivener (a writing tool) for me to trial. I already use Scrivener to write all of my publications. This will allow me to trial it for data collection. I will also capture 'on the go' thoughts using Evernote which is synced on my phone and my iPad (both of which are password protected). I can then move those thoughts to the Scrivener document at regular intervals. I will back up the Scrivener documents in Word at the end of each month to guard from corruption/deletion.</p> <p>All references to people other than myself will be anonymised.</p>
<p>3. How will data be destroyed after the end of the project? (Where data is not to be destroyed please give reasons)</p>	<p>My intention is to use this data in the DLaw thesis. It may form part of a chapter which discusses how I came to decide upon my data collection methods. The first submission date for DLaw is 2019. I would expect the original data to be destroyed by deleting the electronic files shortly after the submission date.</p>
<p>4. Any other ethical issues anticipated?</p>	<p>No.</p>

Staff Signature (indicating that the research will be conducted in conformity with the above and agreeing that any significant change in the research project will be notified and a "Project Amendment Form" submitted.

Date: 27.8.15 **Staff Signature:** Elaine Campbell

Please Note:

The appropriate completion of this form is a critical component of the University Policy on Ethical Issues in Research and Consultancy. If further advice is required, please contact the Faculty Research Ethics Committee through bl.ethics.administrator@northumbria.ac.uk in the first instance.

Appendix 5

Updated Ethical Issues Form



Faculty of Business and Law

Staff Research and Consultancy

Ethical Issues Form

Staff Name:	Elaine Campbell
Department:	Law
Title of Research / Consultancy Project:	An autoethnographic exploration of my role as a clinical supervisor
Please categorise your research as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning & Pedagogical • Discipline based • Contribution to practice • A multiple of the above 	Learning & Pedagogical Contribution to practice
Start Date of Research / Consultancy project:	29 September 2015

	Comments
Brief description of the proposed research methods including, in particular, whether human subjects will be involved and how.	<p>I have recently been accepted on to the DLaw Professional Doctorate. My research question is: "What can an autoethnographic approach reveal about my role as a clinical supervisor?"</p> <p>Autoethnography (AE) is a qualitative research methodology where the researcher examines social and cultural context, but through their own personal experience. It is reflexive research which allows the researcher to explore their lived experience and analyse the way their phenomenon exists within a broader socio-cultural narrative. This approach will form the basis of this research.</p> <p>AE is first and foremost about the researcher. It involves active self-reflection: examining "a social and cultural context, but through the personal experience of the researcher" (Haynes, 2011: 235). As Haynes notes, by using reflective autobiographical material the researcher has access to her own ontology, and makes herself 'an object for analytical discussion in a way that links epistemology and methodology' (Haynes, 2006: 218). In the Handbook of Qualitative Research, Ellis & Bochner (the parents of the modern</p>

	autoethnographic movement) note how important it is to 'make the researcher's own experience a topic of investigation in its own right' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000: 733).
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<p>Chapter 8 How will informed consent of research participants be acquired?</p> <p>(If appropriate attach draft informed consent form)</p>	<p>The data collected will be about myself, not other people. Data collected will contain no named references to other persons. It will all be anonymised. Nevertheless, I will inform SLO colleagues and the students that I work with about my research. I will explain that that the people that I interact with are not the focus of the research.</p> <p>In terms of writing up, if reference is made to any person other than myself identifying characteristics such as circumstance, gender, place, appearance will be altered. This is standard practice in autoethnographic works. An alternative approach is to fictionalise events, creating a 'story' which contains a composite of the researcher's experiences. Medford (2006) also puts forward the idea of 'mindful slippage' e.g. making decisions about what to put in and leave out of an autoethnographic work. In line with this and other texts which look at the ethics of autoethnographic work, I will treat my autoethnography as a permanent 'inked tattoo' and attempt to anticipate my own, and others', future vulnerabilities.</p>
<p>Chapter 9 How will research data be collected, securely stored and anonymity protected (where this is required)</p>	<p>1. Time spent on clinical supervision: Data on time spent will be collected using a paper based diary. It will not be a narrative diary. It will be place to record in writing time spent on a certain activity. Those written entries will only state what the activity has been e.g. clinical supervision, literature review, updating a document, lunch break, preparing for a conference paper etc. It will not include detailed commentary or any names. I will not be completing the diary in any teaching sessions. It may travel with me to staff meetings but it will not contain anything different from a standard work diary (in fact, it will contain much less detailed information).</p> <p>2. Narrative of my role as a clinical supervisor: In keeping with the traditional approaches to autoethnography, I will keep an electronic journal that captures my experiences, understandings and emotions about my role as a clinical supervisor. The focus here will not be on other individuals in the team, students or clients. I will use a Word document saved to the University U Drive in a folder marked Private and Confidential. In line with Watt's (2007) approach to autoethnographic journaling I anticipate that I will journal at the end of each day. .</p> <p>No electronic capture, recording or otherwise will take place. It is entirely my own diary and journaling notes.</p>
<p>Chapter 10 How will data be destroyed after the end of the project? (Where data is not to be destroyed please give reasons)</p>	<p>In accordance with the seventh edition of the University's Research Ethics and Governance handbook (2014-2015) the data will be destroyed three years after the project has been written up (current DLaw thesis completion date is March 2019).</p>
<p>Chapter 11 Any other ethical issues anticipated?</p>	<p>No.</p>

Staff Signature (indicating that the research will be conducted in conformity with the above and agreeing that any significant change in the research project will be notified and a "Project Amendment Form" submitted.

Date: 7.10.15 (revised) **Staff Signature:** Elaine Campbell

Please Note:

The appropriate completion of this form is a critical component of the University Policy on Ethical Issues in Research and Consultancy. If further advice is required, please contact the Faculty Research Ethics Committee through bl.ethics.administrator@northumbria.ac.uk in the first instance.

Appendix 6

Ethical approval

From: Nigel Lamond <nigel.lamond@northumbria.ac.uk>
Sent: 21 October 2015 10:16
To: Elaine Campbell <elaine.campbell@northumbria.ac.uk>
Subject: Elaine Campbell - Ethics Approval - An autoethnographic exploration of my role as a clinical supervisor

Dear Elaine

Faculty of Business and Law Ethics Review Panel

Title: An autoethnographic exploration of my role as a clinical supervisor

I am pleased to confirm that following review of the above proposal, ethical approval has been granted on the basis of this proposal and subject to compliance with the University policies on ethics and consent and any other policies applicable to your individual research.

All researchers must also notify this office of the following:

- Any significant changes to the study design;
- Any incidents which have an adverse effect on participants, researchers or study outcomes;
- Any suspension or abandonment of the study;

We wish you well in your research endeavours.

Best wishes,

Nigel

Nigel Lamond

Research Administrator (Ethics), Research and Business Services

Appendix 7
DLaw Proposal

LA 0141: DLaw Research Proposal

What can an autoethnographic approach reveal about my role as a clinical supervisor?

Elaine Campbell, Northumbria Law School, Faculty of Business & Law

Student number 99309457

Introduction and Context

When I first became a clinician in the Student Law Office at Northumbria Law School I searched the literature for other clinician's stories. I wanted to read about their personal experiences of supervising real legal work within a university environment. Primarily, I craved knowledge of fellow clinician's thoughts and emotions on the nature of their role. As time went on, I also became interested in the amount of time that clinicians spent on supervision. I felt that clinical supervision took over my working day, and I also spent many evenings and weekends trying to get on top of the workload. I wanted to know whether other clinician's experiences accorded with mine.

I knew that clinicians had stories to tell. I only had to walk down the corridor and start a conversation with 'I've got a student/case..' and I would be immediately engaged with tales of frustration, sleepless nights, the amount of emotional and physical time which clinic required, laughter, and just getting on with it.

I did not find these detailed stories of lived experience in the literature. Instead, I found plenty of articles that purported to explain *how* to be an effective supervisor. Whilst they contained sensible instructions, the author was positioned as a dispassionate observer. The voice of the supervisor was no-where to be seen. Even in articles that looked promising, like Hoffman's '*The Stages of the Clinical Supervisory relationship*' (Hoffman, 1986) there was no use of 'I'. It was always 'the supervisor' does this and 'the supervisor' does that.

Although I did not know it then, what I was looking for was autoethnographic work. Autoethnography is "an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.733). It has clear links to anthropology, although the focus is on the self rather than the study of persons or groups. The autoethnographer is the site or location of the study. Their narrative "places the self within a social context" (Reed-Danahay, 1997, p.9), providing a "provocative weave of story and theory" (Spry, 2001, p.410).

My study will explore my experiences as a law school clinical supervisor, using autoethnography as a methodological framework. This has not been done before. My research question is: **"What can an autoethnographic approach reveal about my role as a clinical supervisor?"**. This allows me to explore two elements: (1) the lived reality of my role as a clinician (2) the strengths and limits of autoethnography, an emerging methodology.

Literature Review

What I know already and how I know it

(i) *Expertise and professional experience plus previous scholarly work*

I have been a clinician since 2011. Throughout that time, I have attended and presented at numerous conferences throughout the world. Through my daily working life, and attendance at clinical legal education events, I have amassed a wealth of knowledge about experiential education in law schools. Please click [here](#) for an up to date list of papers and publications.

I started to write for academic journals in 2014. All of my articles have focused on clinical legal education. My first, which questioned whether clinics needed to become Alternative Business Structures, was published in the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education (IJCLE) (Campbell, 2014). I then wrote two further peer-reviewed articles - one for Practitioner Research in Higher Education (Elaine Campbell, 2015a) another for IJCLE (Elaine Campbell, 2015b) – that explored student-centred group work in the law clinic environment.

I am one of only a handful of clinicians in the UK that supervise students who provide legal advice to businesses and entrepreneurs. I wrote the first article, published in *The Law Teacher*, to specifically explore the rise of business law clinics in the United Kingdom (Elaine Campbell, 2015). A similar piece is due to be published in the *Journal of Legal Education* in February 2016. I have also published work on the role of legal clinics and access to justice (Campbell & Murray, 2015), and creativity and the legal curriculum (Gleason & Campbell, 2015). I have recently returned to the issue of clinics as Alternative Business Structures in a piece for *The Law Teacher* (in review).

Having recognised that there was a gap in the literature, I have written what I believe to be the first article which brings together autoethnography and legal education (Campbell, 2016). Entitled '*Exploring Autoethnography as a Method and Methodology in Legal Education Research*', the article explicitly seeks to fill a gap in the literature by fixing the narrative in the law school. Drawing on my own autoethnographic vignettes and reflexive journal entries, I provide a first-hand account of entering the world of autoethnography – the intensity and the challenges.

(ii) Beginnings of doctoral review

I conducted an initial review of the literature whilst investigating autoethnography as a potential methodology for the DLaw. Encouraged by my research mentor, Dr Elaine Hall, to explore autoethnography I started with Kim Etherington's '*Becoming a Reflexive Researcher: Using Our Selves in Research*' (Etherington, 2004) - a book which she had recommended. I still have a copy of the reference list where I highlighted works by Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner. Later, I typed "autoethnography" into a Google search bar and watched Ellis and Bochner (Ellis & Bochner, 2014) and, later, Sarah Wall (Wall, 2014) on YouTube speaking about autoethnography. I followed the references in those videos and read the articles listed.

I began to carry out a systematic review of the literature, looking for autoethnographic articles relating to clinical legal education. I searched Web of Science, HeinOnline, Westlaw and Lexis Nexis. I began by searching for "autoethnography" to see how many articles each database would find. My intention was then to use Boolean operators and linking phrases (e.g. "autoethno* AND clinic*"; "autoethno* AND "education"") to limit my search. In Web of Science, the search for "autoethnography" yielded 70 results. In Westlaw, it was three. In HeinOnline, "autoethno*" yielded 52 results. Unsurprisingly, there were 0 results for LexisNexis. None of the articles listed referred to clinical education, let alone clinical *legal* education. The articles listed for autoethnography and education focused on issues such as race, gender and disability, rather than the lived experience of the role of educator. I tried alternative search terms, such as "'narrative" AND "clinical legal education"' but they did not yield any useful results.

At the same time as conducting my systematic review, I was reading a minimum of one article on autoethnography per day. I found those articles through the reference lists of the works that I read. Each article led me to another. I made my choices based on the knowledge that I wanted to accumulate. For example, I read the much cited works, but I also focussed on articles which explored ethics in autoethnography and those which were located in the educational world. I created an Excel spreadsheet to capture my literature review. This process of "systematized creativity" or intuitive research is a feature of an abductive approach to reasoning (Andreewsky & Bourcier, 2000; Taylor, Fisher, & Dufresne, 2002). Rather than follow a narrow process, abductive reasoning allows for an intuitive leap. I am drawn to an abductive approach because its focus is on interpretation and understanding new perspectives. These are phrases that are strongly associated with autoethnography. It makes sense to me that an autoethnographer would approach the literature in this way.

My initial review of the literature has revealed the following:

- **Academic practice in higher education is an underexamined area in autoethnographic literature:** Reed-Danahay is a strong critique of "misleading titles" (Reed-Danahay, 2009, p.38) that mention educational settings but do not "deal explicitly with academic

practices and university settings” (Reed-Danahay, 2009, p.39). My review supports this view.

- **Clinical teaching in higher education is almost completely missing from the autoethnographic literature:** I have found one article that links clinical teaching with autoethnography. However, it is located in medicine (Griffin, McLeod, Francis, & Brown, 2015), rather than the law school. Reflecting on the use of dummies in nursing education, the authors state that they want to use autoethnography to “more fully understand and explicate the complexities of simulated learning for educators and the potential benefits to be gained by nursing students who are preparing for clinical practice” [online, no pg numbers]. However, the majority of the paper consists of extracts from student feedback which is then used to draw conclusions such as “this evidence suggests that teaching and learning experiences in the university sector may have fallen short” [online, no pg numbers]. In my opinion, this is not autoethnography. It is merely a statement about student feedback.
- **No single study exists which explores clinical legal education through an autoethnographic framework:** Law school clinicians frequently make claims that live client clinic provides space for a transformative event in our students’ lives. Much of this is due to the collegiate nature of the connection between supervisor and student as they work towards the common goal of advising the client. Yet, we rarely provide any evidence for any such transformation beyond survey data and extracts from student feedback questionnaires. We do not delve into our own thoughts, feelings, emotions and interactions as a way of understanding our own roles and the educational and personal effect(s) that role has. To date, I can find no single autoethnographic study which uses the role of the law school clinical supervisor as a realm for exploration and analysis.
- **Guidance on the ethics of autoethnography is limited and inconsistent:** 85% of the articles that I have listed in my autoethnography literature review do not mention ethics whatsoever. Perhaps it is more troubling that some of those that do appear be using autoethnography to ‘get around’ ethical issues. Jones states that autoethnography is the “solution” to the “ethical problem” of telling others’ stories (Jones, 2007). Ernest & Vallack used autoethnography when they could not get ethical approval to investigate (what they saw as) a poor change to the school curriculum. It gave them “license” (Ernst & Vallack, 2015) to write their story. Grant openly admits that his family “when sane” are “narrow-minded Daily Mail readers” (Grant, 2010, p.115) so he feels fine writing about them because they are unlikely to read the academic journals in which he publishes. There are clear issues with all of these authors’ suggestions.

What I’m going to look for and how I’m mapping the search

My leaning towards interpretivism (see next section) informs all aspects of this study. I have adopted an exploratory, immersive approach to the literature review. This will continue as I move forward. My next steps will be to:

1. Start to structure my review

Over the last year I have amassed four lever arch files and a complementary electronic database of autoethnography related literature. Whilst I will continue with my intuitive approach to the literature review, I will also start to structure that review where possible into clear themes and categories (e.g. ethics, education, evocative/analytic autoethnography).

2. Check there are no existing articles that explore clinical legal education using through autoethnography

I am confident that this is the case. However, I am due to have a one to one with Northumbria Library staff to ensure that I have not overlooked anything during my initial search.

3. Review autoethnographic data analysis

To date, I have only found one article which specifically details how the author has analysed their autoethnographic data. I am in the process of reading a number of autoethnographic theses in order to see what literature there is on the analysis of this kind of data, and will continue to search for this.

Epistemology and Research Design

The position of the researcher

The role of the researcher in autoethnography has been characterised by Merton as “the ultimate participant in a dual participant-observer role” (Merton, 1988, p.18). By placing the ethnographic lens on yourself, the researcher is required to lay their cards on the table and locate themselves firmly within the social world that they are exploring.

In terms of philosophical stance, I currently lean away from positivism and towards interpretivism. The interpretivist approach “looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life world” (Crotty, 1998, p.67). This accords with my worldview. I try to understand what is happening in certain scenarios by exploring the experiences of the people at the heart of that phenomenon.

What kind of knowledge is valid? I believe that what we know is informed by who we are and the culture we are immersed in. Knowledge comes from us. We explore and we arrive at an understanding. We interpret our world and are shaped by our own interpretations. We cannot separate ourselves from what we know.

How can we make sense of existence/reality? I believe that my reality is informed by experience and constructed through social meanings. I interpret my environment and myself due to the way that I have been, and continue to be, shaped by my own culture.

However, philosophical assumptions are not simply placed into clear cut categories. In her Visiting Fellow lecture on 8 December 2015, Professor Gina Grandy spoke about being on a sliding scale. She was more inclined towards social constructivism, but the positivist roots of her undergraduate and postgraduate degrees still informed her beliefs. Like Professor Grandy, I am shaped by multiple paradigms. I favour the messy and exploratory interpretivist approach, but my background as a lawyer means that I also like order, structure and find fault in vague or ‘wishy washy’ answers. This means that my love of interpretivism - and my methodological approach informed by it, autoethnography - is not a blind love.

The researcher and the research question

Why this question, and why now?

Ellis’ *‘Jumping On and Off the Runaway Train of Success: Stress and Committed Intensity in an Academic Life’* is an evocative autoethnographic account of the daily toil of academia. From the very start, we are on the runaway train with Ellis. We are clinging on to the inside of the unstable vehicle which takes us faster and faster down a track where “there is always one more article to revise, student to counsel, committee on which to serve, paper to grade, letter of recommendation to write, and book to read” (Ellis, 2011, p.160). The deeply personal story lets us see Ellis’ 3am nightmares, feel her increasing frustration with students, read emails from overworked colleagues, listen to her conversations with senior colleagues about workload, and experience the voices in her head as they berate her as the “worst kind of whiner” (Ellis, 2011, p.161). This was what I wanted to see in the clinical legal education literature - the lived reality of the role of the supervisor. Put simply, the “warts and bruises” (Ellis, 2007, p.17) experience of supervisors in a university legal clinic is a hidden world, at least in terms of the literature. In writing autoethnographically, I can capture the story of my role as a clinical supervisor. Alongside this, I can also explore the strengths and limits of autoethnography as a methodology.

What kind of a question is it?

Agee argues that a good question “should invite a process of exploration and discovery” (Agee, 2009, p.434). In line with an interpretivist standpoint, my question has an exploratory orientation. It centres on two issues: the role of the clinician in a university law clinic, and the nature of autoethnography as a research methodology.

Engaging with the research question

My research question is: **“What can an autoethnographic approach reveal about my role as a clinical supervisor?”**. It can be divided into three smaller questions:

- (a) what is my emotional experience as a clinical supervisor?
- (b) how much time do I spend on clinical supervision?
- (c) what are the strengths and limitations of autoethnography as a methodology?

In order to answer those questions, I will be using two research tools:

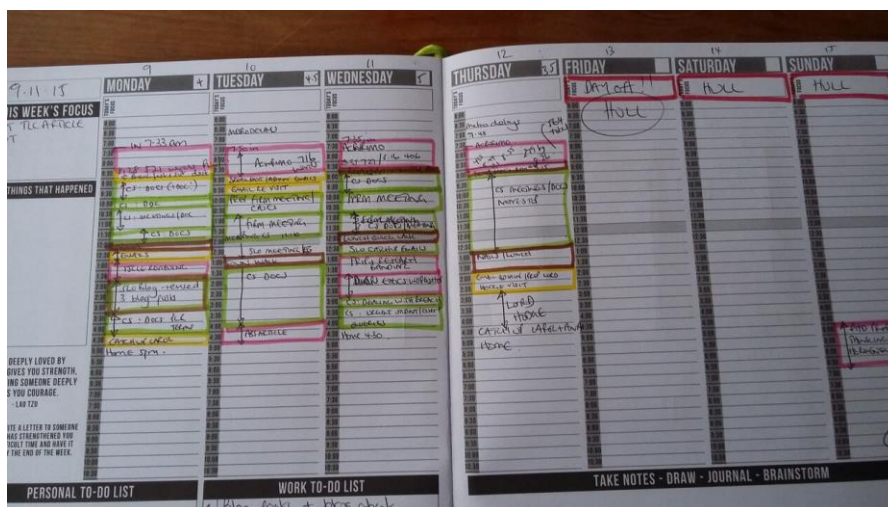
1. The reflective journal: Capturing the ‘story’ of my role as a clinical supervisor

In keeping with the traditional approaches to autoethnography, I will keep an electronic Microsoft Word-based journal that captures my experiences, understandings and emotions about my role as a clinical supervisor.

I will produce “thick descriptions” (Geertz, 1973, p.10) of my personal experience. First, this will allow me to explore and understand my role as a clinical supervisor. Secondly, by ‘doing autoethnography’ I can explore its use and limits as a methodology.

2. The daily activity diary: Capturing time I spend on clinical supervision

Data on the time I spend on clinical supervision each day will be collected using a paper based diary. It will not be a narrative diary. Instead, it will be place to record time spent on a certain activity. The entries will note what that activity has been (e.g. clinical supervision, administration, research etc.) and each entry will be colour coded accordingly. Please see photo below:



I have already obtained ethical approval from the Faculty Ethics Committee to use these tools (Appendix 1).

Whilst I am collecting quantitative data via the daily activity diary, I would still position this as a qualitative study. The primary research tool is the reflective journal and autoethnography – perhaps the ultimate qualitative approach with its emphasis on the subjective self – is at the study's core. The data from the daily activity will be used to facilitate a greater understanding of the time I spend on supervision. Time recording is also a requisite in private practice, and therefore is professionally congruent with the world of a solicitor.

Strengths and weaknesses of the research design

The Reflexive Journal

Strengths:

1. Practically: Using a single electronic reflective diary means that I can keep my thoughts in one place. It also means that I can note my thoughts as they occur to me, or relatively soon after a situation that I want to capture has occurred.
2. Autoethnography as methodology: I think it's important to note the power of lowering the barrier between researcher and researched. As Richardson (Richardson, 1992, p.125) notes even interpretivists "inherit an academic culture that holds a traditional authority over them. That culture suppresses and devalues its members' subjective experiences" (Richardson, 1992, p.125). Autoethnography, on the other hand, invites the researcher – as the participant – to explore their subjective experience.

Weaknesses:

1. Practical issues: My entries will not be written on a daily basis. Instead they will coincide with critical moments which provoked further thought and reflection. Inevitably, there will be times when I will not write about a particular scenario – I may be too busy to do this, or I may have emotionally moved on from the critical moment by the time I come to write about it. This could be viewed as a weakness and I will need to be prepared to answer questions about the nature and number of journal entries I create.

2. Criticisms:

- a. Axiological issues: (a) relational ethics (b) self care

There is an ongoing debate on the ethical nature of autoethnography. Please see the literature review section above. Authors who do talk about autoethnography and ethics (and there are fewer than you would expect) tend to focus on relational ethics e.g. what about the people we talk about? However, there is also the question of self care e.g. what might be the impact of writing about yourself and your emotions on your own wellbeing? Might there not also be harm for the autoethnographer? Delamont is clear in her view – she says that "auto-ethnography is almost impossible to write and publish ethically" (Delamont, 2007, p.2).

- b. Narcissism/self-indulgence

The main criticism levelled against autoethnography is that it is a methodology which has narcissism at its core (Atkinson, 1997; Coffey, 1999; Patai, 1994). This is not helped by autoethnography's unfortunate moniker 'mesearch' (Rees, 2015). Sara Delamont argues that it is "literally lazy and also intellectually lazy" (Delamont, 2007, p.2). Bruner warns that the danger is putting the auto so "deeply back in the text that it completely dominates so that the work becomes narcissistic and egotistical" (Bruner, 1993, p.6).

The Daily Activity Diary

Strengths: It is a simple task to do each day. I note, usually every few hours, the type of work that I have been carrying out e.g. clinical supervision, research.

Weaknesses: I cannot record time minute by minute. I may have to record time spent after the event, or even another day. This raises the argument that the data may not be accurate. I would counter that by saying that I am not aiming – nor do I think it is possible – to create an absolutely accurate recording of time spent each day. Rather, I am aiming to get a sense of the proportion of time I spend on clinical supervision.

What does that say for the overall strength and warrant of the study?

There are a number of perceived weaknesses associated with this type of reflective work. The strength of this study will come from its engagement with those criticisms. The exploration of the methodology is very much at the core of the study itself.

It is also an inquiry which centres on one person's lived experience of a role, and the data is collected by that person. This means that there are fewer barriers between the researcher and the researched. Indeed, the study will acknowledge (and invite the exploration of) subjectivity, the impact of emotion and my influence on the research. The strength of this study is that it will not hide from these issues.

Approaches to analysis

I am at an early stage in terms of mapping potential analysis options. My literature review to date shows that there is very little guidance on the analysis of autoethnographic work. This has two consequences: (a) I have the opportunity to influence the field by developing and sharing my own analytic framework, and (b) I will need to draw on work from different disciplines. For example, I am currently influenced by Grandy's work on interpretative data analysis of interviews. Grandy refers to data analysis being an "iterative process" (Grandy & Mavin, 2012, p. 772). She talks of "rummaging" (Grandy & Mavin, 2012, p.772) through the data, and initial and focused coding. I will be exploring Grandy's work and the work she references as I consider my own approach to analysis.

How am I ensuring transparency and replicability? What other kinds of validity am I seeking?

Autoethnography has transparency at its core. At all times, the researcher is reflecting on their subjective views, thoughts and understandings. I will also ensure transparency, by describing the analytic process in detail. In doing this, I will allow others to replicate the study using their own experiences.

Proposed knowledge claims

What new knowledge or perspective will there be at the end of the research?

- Whilst focused on a single person's experience, the findings will contribute to knowledge and understanding of the role of the clinical supervisor;
- The time recording data has potential implications for higher education policy & practice, especially where workloading of clinical staff is concerned;
- This study will add to our knowledge of autoethnography as a methodology in the following ways:
 - Ethics: through the study I will develop the first ethical framework for autoethnographic practice in the Faculty. This can be shared with other institutions.
 - Rigour: the quality of work using this emerging methodology is in dispute. My study will

explore the strengths and limits of autoethnography, and provide guidance on producing autoethnographic work which has rigour.

What kinds of warrant will there be for these claims?

The warrant for these claims comes from the quality of the autoethnographic work. The concentration on one person's lived experience and the rich description that arises as a result of that immersive act plus a strong analytical framework will produce autoethnography that goes beyond 'telling a story'. In addition, I will be considering and responding to the arguments against autoethnography.

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Section 2: Project Plan

Overview of the pragmatic plan

The Project Plan is broken down into three years. Please see the *3 Year View Project Plan Gantt Chart* below.

Year 1 (2016 – March 2017)

Literature Review: As I have already been reviewing the literature for over a year, Year 1 will involve (a) consolidation and categorisation of the literature I have already reviewed and (b) filling any significant gaps. I have divided the literature review into three subjects: autoethnography as methodology, autoethnography and ethics, and autoethnography and data analysis. I will be giving a paper at IJCLE Conference (10-12 July 2016) where I will defend the use of autoethnography as methodology. This will be my first milestone and I intend to use this event as a catalyst to bring together my literature review of the methodology and start to write about it as part of the thesis (and potentially

a reviewed article).

Data Collection: I will continue to collect my data throughout Y1 and part way through Y2.

I have also created a *First Millstone Gantt Chart* showing my plan up to and including my first milestone – the IJCLE Conference Paper on autoethnography.

Year 2: (March 2017 – March 2018)

Y2 will focus on data analysis work. I will continue to collect data until May 2017 and I will be consolidating my review of the literature on analysis. As part of my contribution to the field will be new analysis of autoethnographic material, I want to put aside a good amount of time for this. Although I will be doing other work on the doctorate, this will be my main objective for Y2.

Year 3: (March 2018 – March 2019)

As with Y2, I will be other work on the doctorate in Y3 but my focus will be on writing up. Realistically, I need to have my submission ready for January 2019 (if not before). This gives me approx. 8/9 months (alongside my SL role) to write, revise and format the final thesis.

Strengths and Opportunities

How does this work dovetail with my professional life?

I believe this plan to be robust, but achievable. I have already read, spoken and published on autoethnography so Y1 will focus on bringing together what I have and using it more effectively. Y2 will focus on data analysis and my contribution to this. Y3 will centre on writing up. As this is a part-time PhD on top of a full time job I have resisted giving myself silly deadlines, and have allowed enough room for slippage or re-organisation.

My data collection dovetails very well with my professional life. My time recording occurs throughout the day, and has become second nature. The journal entries are about my professional life.

Threats and Weaknesses

What practical obstacles are there?

One obstacle is the approach to journaling. Journaling is a double edged sword. On the one hand, there is the potential for a significant amount of data. On the other hand, I have already discovered that journaling every couple of days (or even every week) can be difficult. I have had occasions where I have been unable to journal because there have been critical moments which have taken over the working day. I sometimes feel that moments are 'lost'.

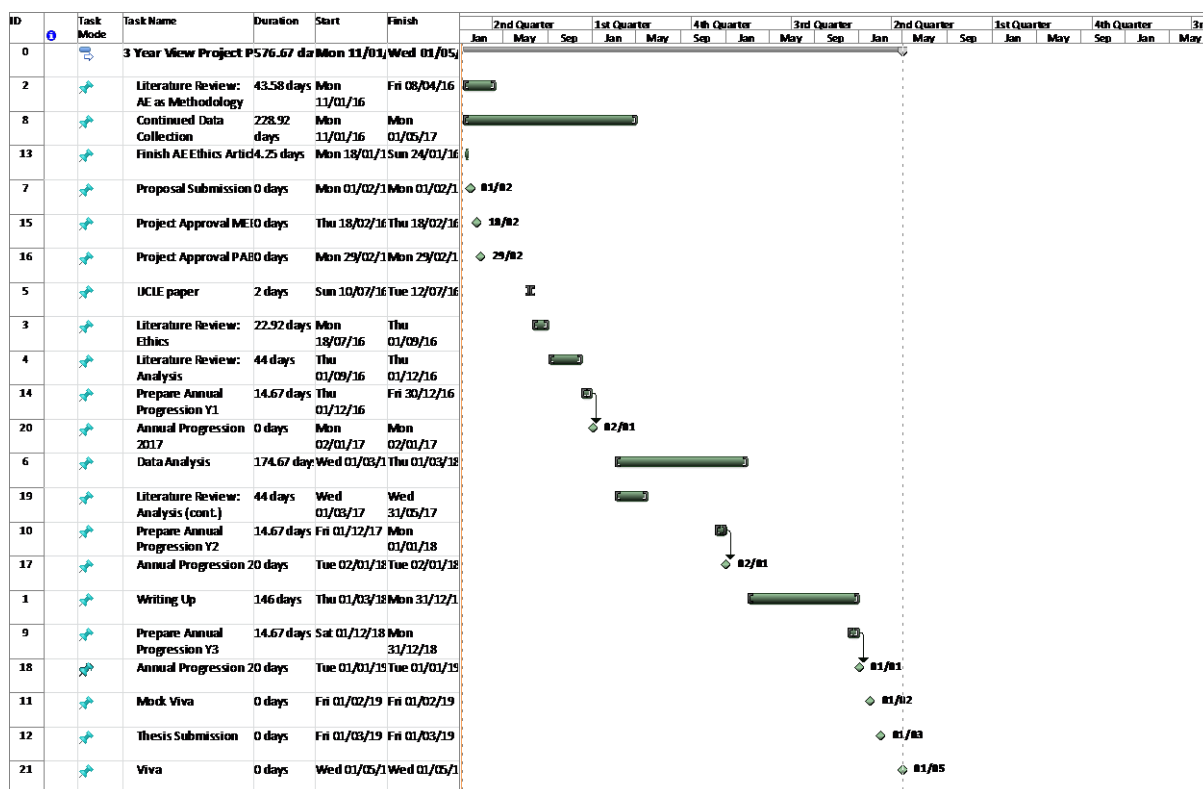
Another threat is the division of time between the PhD and my role as Senior Lecturer. I am supervising legal advice which is provided under my practising certificate by final year law students. I have a duty to my clients and a duty to my students. It can be incredibly hard to put this work to one side. Realistically, real legal work for real people has to come first. Outside of clinic work, I have a number of additional duties and projects. Balancing time and making time will be something that I need to consider throughout the study.

Needs analysis

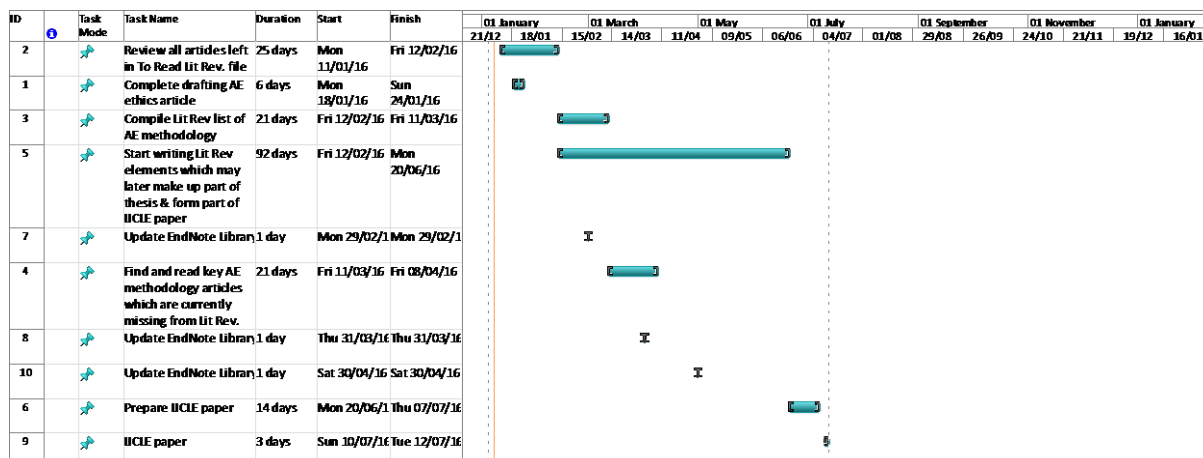
What plans are already in place or can be envisioned?

I have requested Band B (350 hours) research banding on the basis of my 2015 research outputs, my forthcoming research outputs and my progression onto the DLaw Programme. I will need this banding (as a minimum) as I continue. I am also planning to request a sabbatical closer to the writing up stage.

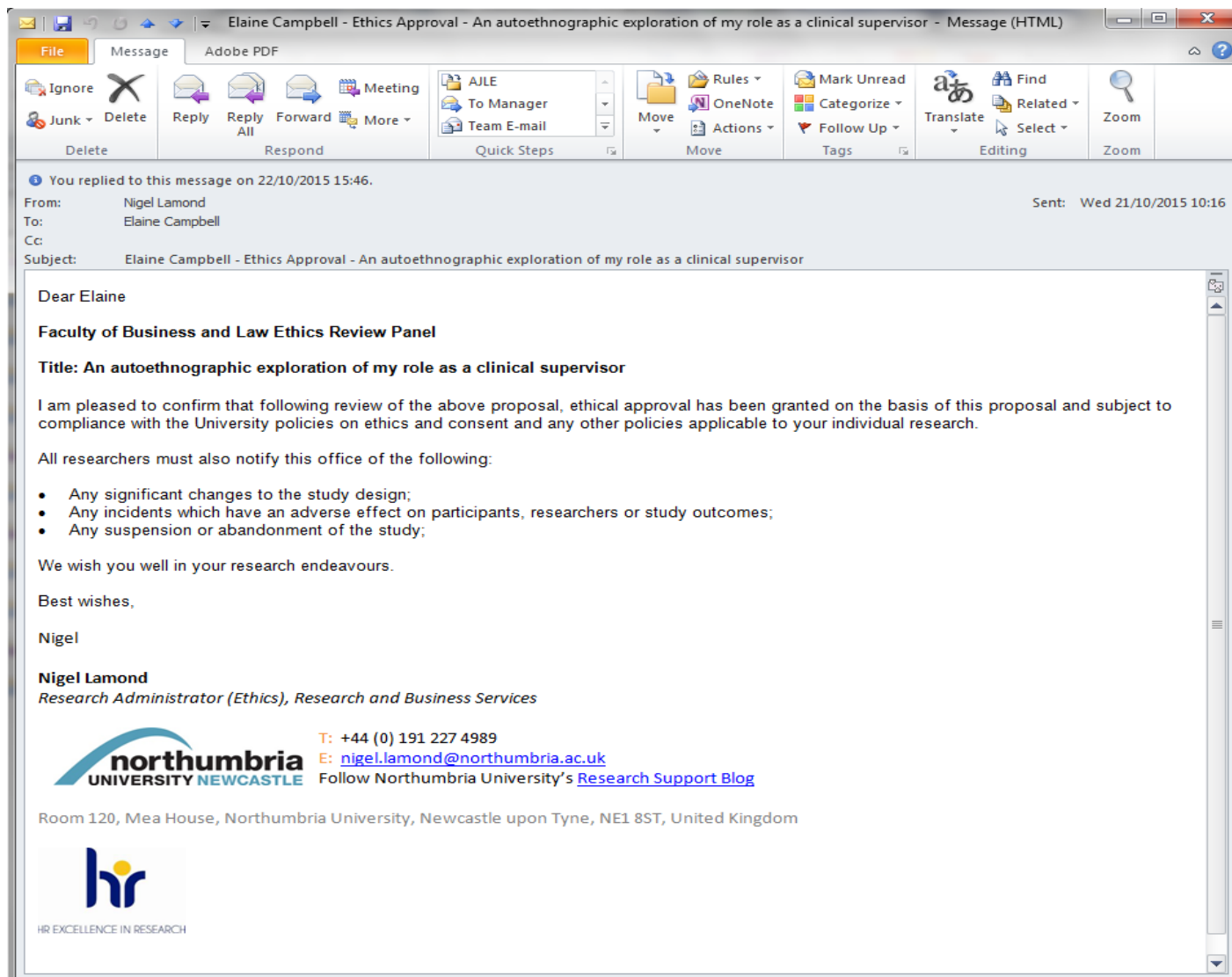
Gantt Chart: 3 Year View Project Plan



Gantt Chart: To First Milestone (IJCLE Conference Paper, 10-12 July 2016)



Appendix 1: Ethics Approval



Appendix 8

A selection of my published autoethnographic works



Journal of Organizational Ethnography

Reconstructing my identity: An autoethnographic exploration of depression and anxiety in academia

Elaine Campbell,

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Reconstructing my identity

An autoethnographic exploration of depression and anxiety in academia

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Reconstructing
my identity

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to offer an insight into mental health illness in academia, and its impact on academic identity.

Design/methodology/approach – The study adopts an evocative autoethnographic approach, utilising diary entries collected during the author's three-month absence from her university due to depression and anxiety. A contemporary methodology, autoethnography seeks to use personal experience to provide a deeper understanding of culture. In this personal story, the author explores her decline in mental health and subsequent re-construction of her academic identity in order to enhance understanding of the organisational culture of higher education.

Findings – This paper illustrates how, rather than being an achievement, academic identity is an ongoing process of construction. Although mental health illness can contribute to a sense of loss of self, identity can be re-constructed during and after recovery. Autoethnographic explorations of depression and anxiety in higher education provide a deeper understanding of an often stigmatized issue, but researchers should be alive to the political and ethical pitfalls associated with deeply reflexive research.

Originality/value – There is little autoethnographic research on mental health illness in a university setting. This paper offers unique insights into the lived experience of depression and anxiety in the context of academic life, through the lens of academic identity.

Keywords Higher education, Autoethnography, Mental health, Academic identity

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

I'm meant to be relaxing. He has messaged me to ask if I'm relaxing. But I made the stupid decision to check emails. And there it was, an email about modules and problems with students. And things that need sorting quickly. And things that I can't work out an answer to. And I write a response to that email saying I'll do whatever needs to be done and that I'm on leave today but I know it's urgent. Why do I feel like shit because I can't fix the problem? Or that I can fix the problem by saying I'll do it but then knowing that I shouldn't be trying to fix all problems? I just want to watch telly and chill out. And it's my day off. And it's his birthday. And I wonder if I'm close to burnout because yesterday I cried in the office when no one was looking. (July, 2016)

Eight weeks after I wrote the diary entry above, I called a doctor and told him I thought I might be suffering from depression. I had done the online test. The test said I was. I knew I was. The doctor asked me a few questions and confirmed that I needed to come into the surgery as soon as possible. It took a week to get an appointment. When I eventually walked into the doctor's office, desperately unhappy, I barely knew who I was and what I was doing. My shoulders were permanently slumped. I did not care about my appearance. I felt numb:

I'm an academic at a university.

I think I've done too much.

The author is hugely indebted to the colleagues who supported the author during author's time away from work and author's subsequent return. The author would like to thank the two reviewers for their insightful constructive comments, and for helping the author in making the author's manuscript a much stronger piece of work. Finally, to "him": here's to goats on plinths and a very happy married life together. We are a great team. Thank you for always being there.



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Sent away with a prescription for anti-depressants and the recommendation of counselling (privately if I could afford it, or else wait six months), I trundled home and continued to think about work. I took a week's holiday, and spent every day running over and over what I needed to do at work, and how I was going to do it. My brain never switched off. I woke up night after night at 2 am like clockwork, checking my work emails on my mobile phone. When I returned to work the Monday after my holiday, I spent most of the morning steadying myself. I was at the top of a ladder swaying violently from side to side, just waiting to lose my grip. Every couple of minutes, I felt what I can only describe as a "whooshing" go right through my stomach. Perhaps it was fear. Perhaps it was part of me, the healthy, strong, focussed me, leaving my body to find a home elsewhere. In any event, it only took one e-mail – one tiny message asking me to do something – to send me flying into the abyss. Goodbye ladder. Hello three months of sick leave.

I was fortunate to receive six free counselling sessions through my university almost straight away. In the early days, I swung between two equally hideous states. I either cried angrily, insisting to my counsellor that I had to get back to work immediately. Or I was silent, eyes dotting around the room glimpsing posters on suicide prevention and mindfulness trying to work out how on earth I got here and how I could wake myself up from the nightmare this clearly was. One day, my counsellor took a small wicker basket full of contrasting stones and pebbles from behind her, and placed it on the table between us. "This is your life", she said. "Each stone represents someone in your life. Take your time. Which stone represents, let's say, your partner?". I stared at those rocks. I kept staring. I heard the soft ticking of the clock on the wall as I stared some more. Minutes went by. More staring. "There's no right or wrong answer. Just go for what you feel is best", my counsellor utters soothingly. Panic sets in. I want to pick one but I know in my heart whichever stone I choose will be a lie. I do not want to lie. I want this to mean something. And then it dawns on me and I say it out loud. "I can't pick a stone that represents my partner". And, triumphantly, with a sense of relief, "That's because he doesn't come to work with me". A pause hangs in the air. My counsellor looks at me with sadness, and gently but robustly says "Elaine, I didn't say the bowl was about work. I said it was about your life".

In my 20s, I had trained as a commercial solicitor. I left private practice in my early 30s, driven by my love of teaching into higher education. For seven years, I built my academic identity. On the face of it, I was a healthy and confident individual. But I kept taking on more. Doing more. Not stopping. Trying to get the end of a "to do" list that perpetually re-filled. Work occupied my evenings and weekends, not always physically, but emotionally. Even when my laptop was switched off, my brain continued to whirr. Clearly work had become the embodiment of my life, and, eventually and inevitably, that came to a head. Alongside depression, I was diagnosed with high-functioning anxiety-high achieving and perfectionistic, busy and overambitious, outwardly super-positive, but inwardly wracked with worry. During my time on sick leave, the coping mechanisms I utilised at work continued at home. I created highly structured routines where I would work through entire series of television shows one by one, watching episodes at the same time each day. I ate only Coco Pops, relentlessly filling the cereal bowl, unable to leave any residual milk. I slept every afternoon in the same place on the sofa, with the same blanket tucked in exactly the same way. I "employed" myself as my own cleaner, making sure each room in the house was spotless by 12 pm on the dot.

I kept a diary during my time away from work. Looking at my diary entries, the repeated allusion to the eradication of my academic identity is striking. Much has been written about the construction of academic identity, but less so what happens when that identity is suddenly swept away. Equally, narratives on depression and anxiety experienced by academics are few in number. Using extracts from my diary, and writing autoethnographically, I seek to offer an insight on mental health illness in academia, and its impact on identity. Autoethnography, where the researcher becomes the researched, "writes a world in a state of flux and movement – between story and context, writer and

reader, crisis and denouement. It creates charged moments of clarity, connection, and change" (Holman Jones, 2005, p. 764). This autoethnography is not linear. You may find yourself frustrated at the messy structure. I am not, however, attempting to provide you with a neatly packaged story. My goal is to present an autoethnography that contributes to a greater understanding of mental distress by evoking an emotional experience. Rather than take a neutral, distanced stance, I encourage you to engage in a dialogue with the text.

Reconstructing my identity

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Academic identity

I have let everyone down by being weak. My identity is revealed as a fraud. What do I tell my family? What do I tell his family? Will I go back? How can I go back? But I must go back and I will go back.

Sometimes it hits me. Pit of stomach lurch: I'm off sick. That's now part of my identity. The girl who couldn't cope. The girl who needs to be referred to Occupational Health. The weak one. The one colleagues won't know if they can rely on. The girl with the question mark over her head. The facade is over. I tried for years to construct an image and in one fell swoop have destroyed it. I have proven to myself that I have a limit. See, you thought you could fly high, but you flew too close to the sun and now you're falling. And everyone can see. Everyone can see you fall. Back you go to the level where you belong. (September, 2016)

The literature exploring academic identity is vast, complex and multifaceted. I do not pretend to provide a comprehensive account of academic identity theory here. Rather, this section is designed to give an insight into perspectives on the "vexed question" (Clegg, 2008, p. 329) of academic identities, the theories of identity that have influenced this paper and how I constructed my identity prior to my mental health decline.

Research into academic identity is overwhelmingly positioned in terms of the changing culture in higher education. Studies explore questions of identity through the lens of neo-liberalism (Harris, 2005), government policy, external funding requirements and the increasing commercialisation of higher education (Henkel, 2005; Taylor, 2008). Influenced by a reshaping of the university as a corporate enterprise, with Vice-Chancellors "increasingly prepared to describe universities as businesses" (Henkel, 2005, p. 163), disciplinary culture has transformed into managerial culture (Henkel, 2005, p. 159). Institutions are re-orienting their focus, prompted by external factors such as research (and, more recently in the UK, teaching) assessment frameworks that encourage the fetishisation of competition (Naidoo, 2016). Traditional notions of a "community of scholars" (Harris, 2005, p. 424) embodied by steadfastly held ideals of academic freedom and autonomy are under threat. Billot (2010) describes academics' "increasing disconnect" with institutional adoption of economic objectives (p. 709). Such disconnect may be linked to an emerging narrative bemoaning the loss of a "golden age" (Taylor, 2008, pp. 27 and 30) of academia.

In the context of a rapidly changing environment, how do academics make sense of their identities today? Billot (2010) argues that academic identity "remains a dynamic and slippery construct" (p. 709) and that academics are "grappling with a fluid identity during continual change" (p. 718). Fitzmaurice (2013) and Taylor (2008) put forward a similar argument. Fitzmaurice (2013, p. 614) proposes that academics undergo "an ongoing process of identity constructions and deconstructions in the negotiation of a professional identity". Taylor (2008, p. 30) also utilises the imagery of building works, concluding that "we need to accept that identities are continuously "under construction" and that those constructions are linked to the need for personal meaning". Continuous change, it seems, requires continual re-imagining of our academic identities. However, the notion of re-construction is not unique to academia. Literature on the identity theory is firm in the idea that our sense of self is not set in stone. Instead, we engage in an ongoing effort of making sense of who we are, when situated in "past, present and future" experiences (Geijssels and Meijers, 2005, p. 423). Identity as a concept is theorised as a reflexive assignment put together via a multiplicity of individual choices

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"filtered through abstract systems" (Giddens, 1991, p. 5). As Winkler (2013, p. 191) explains, identity should not be viewed as an achievement; identity is a project.

Academic identities are influenced by "individual values and beliefs as well as by institutional culture and positioning" (Harris, 2005, p. 426). I know academics whose commitment to social justice is central to the decisions they make, the goals they have, and the way in which they approach and solve problems. I also know others for whom the facilitation of learning is at the heart of their work in higher education and who identify strongly as teachers. Indeed, I once heard a colleague (let us call them Bruce) say they did not care for the term "academic", as it seemed to imply that their role was limited to scholarship. For Bruce, the university was a place of education, and this directly affected the manifestation of his identity as a teacher. I have also heard the opposite view, an academic (let us call them Fiona) who held strong opinions on the role of universities as seats of research, and research alone. For Fiona the dissemination of scholarly work was a moral imperative and at the heart of a fulfilling and meaningful life. Of course, it is easy to fall into the trap of reducing academics to stereotypes: Bruce, the teacher, tweed jacket elbow patches, cursing the requirement to produce research, and Fiona the researcher, squirrelled away in the metaphorical ivory tower. In reality, many academics find fulfilment in a range of activities that fall within and across the teaching/research divide. However, it is important to acknowledge that the moral framework in which we live fundamentally shapes how we approach academia.

Clarke *et al.*'s (2012) research illustrates the "love" academics associate with their job: "I love teaching, I love writing and I love ideas" (Professor), "I love my job-absolutely love it – and I really believe in what I do" (Senior Lecturer)" (p. 9). Much like the love experienced in a romantic relationship, many of the academics interviewed by Clarke *et al.* (2012) felt strongly committed to their academic life, positioning it as "my life and my identity" (Senior Lecturer)" and "a vocation not a job" (Senior Lecturer)" (p. 9). Whilst the research was limited to business schools, I have heard similar sentiments expressed by colleagues from a variety of disciplines and institutions. Sadly, however, this "labour of love" (2012, p. 6) is being "stretched amid increasingly 'loveless' demands" of the changing neo-liberal university.

Interestingly, in a later piece of work based on the same research project, Knights and Clarke (2014) propose that academic insecurities in the face of increasing audit and monitoring manifest as three identities: "imposters" "aspirants" and "existentialists". Imposter syndrome – feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy – is a well-known phenomenon in academia. One of Knights and Clarke's (2014) participants, for example, spoke of academic idealism: "I suppose, I don't feel I'm an academic in the proper sense [...] there's few academics around – I mean people who have got outstanding brains and write beautifully and all the rest of it. (Lecturer)" (p. 341). Aspirants pursue a position higher than the one they currently hold. This also involves working towards an ideal self closely associated with being a "proper" academic. Finally, existentialists feel "an increasing tension between fulfilling their (career) aspirations and finding meaning from their work" (2014, p. 345). All of these insecurities lead to "identity rendered fragile and precarious" (2014, p. 352). As another participant put it: "you have to be excellent at everything [...] you need to be fucking amazing" (Senior Lecturer)" (2014, p. 342).

The literature on academic identity explores fluidity in the face of culture change, but less so how a deterioration in mental health can affect an academic's sense of self. Mental health problems are one of the main causes of the overall disease burden worldwide (Vos *et al.*, 2013). One in six adults (17 per cent) surveyed in England meet the criteria for a common mental disorder, characterised by a variety of symptoms such as fatigue and sleep problems, forgetfulness and concentration difficulties, irritability, worry, panic, hopelessness, and obsessions and compulsions, which present to such a degree that they cause problems with daily activities and distress (McManus *et al.*, 2016, p. 390). Women are more likely than men to report common mental disorder, and to report severe symptoms (McManus *et al.*, 2016, p. 38).

Sadly, there is little empirical evidence detailing rates of mental health illness in higher education. However, anecdotal evidence, particularly through anonymous pieces published on *The Guardian's* Higher Education Blog, points to a rise. In one blog post, an academic reported a "culture of acceptance" (Anonymous, 2014) of poor mental health in higher education, listing experiences of depression, sleep and eating disorders, addiction, self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Their blog post received an "unprecedented response" (Shaw and Ward, 2014) indicating high levels of psychological distress amongst academics. Work-life balance (or lack of) appears to be a common factor. A survey of University and College Union members from 2013 reported that more than half of the 14,667 respondents from higher education neglected their personal needs because of the demands of their work (Kinman and Wray, 2013, pp. 3-4). Academics working in higher education experience "considerably less" well-being than those in other industries (Kinman and Wray, 2013, p. 14).

I experienced a change in culture at work. My institution restructured and rebranded. A new research-focussed vision emerged. Staff who had previously concentrated solely on teaching (of which I was one) were encouraged to work towards the production of world-leading and internationally excellent research. Some colleagues moved on. Others, like myself, embraced the move towards research. Almost immediately, I started to write and send articles to a number of well-respected journals. My work was published. More research ensued. I spoke at international conferences, sometimes giving more than one paper. Sometimes I went to two conferences in two different countries in the same week. I enrolled on a doctoral programme. In the production of research, and in particular academic writing, I found fulfilment. Alongside this, I continued with my existing teaching activities. I explored new and innovative ways of working with my students. I provided academic and pastoral support. I was nominated for a number of student-led awards, and won the Law Teacher of the Year. I loved my job. Ultimately, I re-constructed my academic identity. Closely aligned with my values – compassion, community, competence, creativity, service and achievement – I carefully fashioned a sense of self as mentor, writer, speaker, influencer and woman on the rise. I had a close eye on promotion, regularly reading the criteria for advancement and seeking opportunities to fill gaps in my profile. Looking back now, whilst outwardly very confident, internally I was plagued with a continual feeling of self-doubt and a desire to be better than I was. My academic identity was a source of meaning for me. I was emotionally tied to my academic work, in all its forms, embodying Chubb *et al.*'s (2017) declaration that "to be an academic is to live academia" (p. 556). But then, with the arrival of my illness, there was nothing. A dark hole appeared. I fell right into it, and continued to fall. To me, I had changed overnight from rising star to a pathetic and unreliable individual. I told myself I had been found out. I was a fraud and everyone now knew it.

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Breaking a taboo: why write about academic depression?

I know I'm not right. I've hidden most of the day in my office. But I'm taking each hour at a time. I then feel guilty that I haven't got anything urgent to do. But I will do. And perhaps I should be writing. But I just want to make it to the end of the day. And I have. I haven't cried. I haven't gone mad. I'm not tip top but perhaps it's all going to be okay. I really hope no-one tilts me off the tightrope I'm currently edging slowly along. (August, 2016).

When I became ill, I was in the first year of a part-time professional doctorate. My doctorate sets out to explore my life as a legal educator through an autoethnographic lens. In year 1, alongside my teaching and administrative roles, I spent time building my literature review, reading all the autoethnography I could manage. I amassed an extensive electronic library filled with autoethnographies. Not satisfied with my computerised collection, I also maintained a paper repository made up of five bulging lever arch files. I dedicated myself to learning about the history of the method, mapping its progress decade by decade.

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By the time I went to the doctor to tell him I knew I was not well, I had completed over 10,000 words of my thesis.

The day I was formally signed off on sick leave, I banished the professional doctorate to my spare bedroom. I still remember the heavy awkwardness of the lever arch files as I lifted them, one by one, up the stairs. I can recall right now the sound they made as I methodically slid each one along the carpet, relegating them all to the darkness of the space under the bed. There was, I felt, no point in keeping the files where I could see them, as I would not need to use them again. I was wrong. Two months into my sick leave, prompted by nothing whatsoever, I suddenly lifted myself from my new home on the living room sofa, drugged upstairs, knelt down near the bed in the spare room and started to pull the lever arch files out from the void. I searched for the file marked J-M, and, once I had found it, sat on the floor and flicked through the pages until I came to a pink divider marked "Jago (2002) – depression".

I had read Jago's (2002) autoethnographic story of her struggle with major depression before, drawn from the consultation of academic annual reports, sporadic diary entries, fragments of her research writing and her memory (p. 734). Jago's (2002) narrative chronicles a time of "emotional devastation, isolation and hopelessness, guilt and self-loathing, paralyzing darkness" (p. 733). Before my illness, I had read the piece with interest. The account explicitly detailed Jago's descent into attempted suicide, and the guilt, fear and paranoia she felt as she returned to work as a junior faculty member. However, my chief motivation for keeping the article on file was because I had recently read Tolich's (2010) criticism of the way in which Jago (and the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, where the article was published) had handled the ethical dilemma of writing about her own experience. At the time, my focus was on autoethnographic ethics. I was trying to come to terms with my own anxieties about writing so publicly about my own life and the lives of others. Right then, academic depression was not at the forefront of my mind.

Resting my back against the bedroom wall, facing the window, I explored Jago's autoethnography again. This time I saw the parallels. First, the sense of being utterly bewildered. "The scene feels surreal. How did I get here?", asks Jago (2002), following a meeting with her dean to discuss her medical leave (p. 737). Then, the use of television to structure the day: "Time is punctuated by the Lifetime television schedule. *The Golden Girls*. *Designing Women*. *Moment of Truth* movies. TNT shows reruns of *ER* three times a day" (2002, p. 740). Finally, the feelings of identity loss ("The tenure time clock stopped. Reputation ruined" (2002, p. 740)) that so dominated my time on sick leave. Jago (2002) took me through her own "roller-coaster ride of depression" (p. 734) and shone a light on my own. Jago (2002) argues her story is the "story of the academy", with the "endless demands on our time, the intellect, the stress" (p. 738). Of course, not all of us who experience the demands of academic life will become ill. Yet, Jago asks important questions: in academia, what counts as success? How can we make sure we cope, rather than crash? What can we do to improve our academic life?

Through autoethnography, Jago's aim was to develop our understanding of depression, particularly in academia. She also wanted to show how we can approach the often highly stressful milieu of teaching, research, and administration. Her research is used extensively as an example of an autoethnographic exploration of depression in higher education. Yet, few have chosen to follow in her footsteps, and I struggled to find alternative autoethnographic illustrations of academic depression in peer-reviewed publications. Happily, the autoethnographic community is a supportive one, and I have recently been directed to Brewis' (2004) account of her experiences with mental health illness. As with Jago's work, I found myself nodding sadly at our shared personal history. I too had taken a "perverse pride" (Brewis, 2004, p. 31) in working every weekend, constantly launching new projects and activities, signing up for more conferences than was healthy and chasing

publication targets of my own making. I also could only switch off “when I was too tired to sit at a keyboard any more, when the house was tidy, the washing up done and all necessary calls made” (Brewis, 2004, p. 31). I also berated myself as “psychologically weak”, wondering why “did I react this way to the slings and arrows of working life, when others assumed equally burdensome workloads and appeared to cope beautifully” (Brewis, 2004, p. 32). Brewis does not explicitly label this piece as autoethnographic, and I suspect that is why I missed it when conducting my literature review. I am left speculating whether more academics have indeed written about their biographical experience of mental health illness, and I have failed to find this research merely because it does not contain the search term “autoethnography”.

Alongside traditional published works, I have also found that academics are finding their voice through blogging. The blog posts published on *The Broken Academic*, for example, provide stories of the “toxic academy”, an exploration of “modern academic life and how it is molded by internal and external dynamics” (Anonymous, 2015). The “Broken Academic” behind the words (I have since discovered their identity, but it is not disclosed on the blog so I retain that anonymity here), uses their blog posts to craft and re-craft autoethnographic papers, berating overlong introductions and unfinished states. However, besides a flurry of activity in 2015, blog posts on *The Broken Academic* are infrequent (three in 2016, zero in 2017).

In an organisation whose purpose is to develop and impart knowledge, poor mental health can be viewed unsympathetically (Thomas, 2014). People may appear understanding, but behind closed doors whispers about the “suitability” of the individual for higher education endure. I have known academics who have hidden their mental distress for fear of being pigeonholed as flimsy and undependable. Happily, I was fortunate to have the support of colleagues of all levels of seniority, who just wanted me to be well and gave me all the time I needed to achieve that goal. However, not everyone experiences such protection and emotional sustenance. One anonymous academic revealed in *The Guardian*’s mental health survey that they were told to “get treatment or lose your job” (Thomas, 2014). Perhaps this is why Jago’s now 15-year-old article remains somewhat of an outlier. So why write about academic depression? Why feel the need to plug the gap in the autoethnographic literature? When answering this question, I draw on Bridgens (2007, p. 4) who wrote that difficult or troubling stories are often “ignored, distorted or silenced” because of the discomfort they cause. For me, if we continue to hide uncomfortable stories then we simply perpetuate the taboo or stigma attached. Ellis and Bochner (1996, p. 25) write that people have expressed gratitude to them for exposing stories that have historically remained unspoken. Those stories, as Ellis and Bochner say, are “gifts” (1996, p. 25). Jago’s autoethnography was a gift to me when I needed it. Her story of despair, disorientation and loss of self must have sub-consciously resonated with me, to the extent that – even in my darkest period – I sought it out again. Jago’s exploration of her changing identity, merging personal with professional, was a source of comfort. If she had not written about her illness, then I would not have found dialogue with another in a similar position, and, to a certain extent, a space in which to consider how I was going to recover. I write about my own experiences in the hope that my story provides solace to others in a similar position.

Telling secrets: protecting myself, protecting others

I was honest with everyone yesterday. I told three people – one from each aspect of my life: home, work, medical – that I was thinking about suicide. I’m convinced I’m not going to do anything because I went through all the different ways I could do it and decided they were either too painful or not for me. My favourite is walking into the sea. I like the sea. But then I thought they might not find my body for ages and everyone would be really upset waiting for it to wash up. Someone did that the other week. Walked out of the house in the middle of the night, all the way down to the

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river, talking to dog walkers along the route. And then gone, washed up weeks later. All that waiting. I don't think I could put people through that. Too much waiting.

That was me yesterday, in the darkness, whereas today I am fine. I'm up at 8am and enjoying the peace. And that's what I told myself yesterday – it will get better, it always does. Telling everyone made me feel better. (October, 2016)

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I have taken the decision to be explicit about being an academic that has experienced depression and anxiety. Like Jago, I have neither used a pseudonym, nor have I diluted the seriousness of my illness. However, in the process of writing this paper, I have frequently edited and deleted certain parts of my narrative. Some parts of my story did not even come close to being written into existence. I have chosen to tell my secrets, but I have also controlled the extent of my own disclosure. In doing so, I have had two overriding concerns: first, to protect myself, and second, to protect others who are part of my story.

Protecting myself

When Haynes (2011, p. 140) wrote about presenting an autoethnographic sexual symbolism paper, she spoke of the "double taboo". For some, autoethnography balances "intellectual and methodological rigor, emotion, and creativity" and "strives for social justice and to make life better" (Adams *et al.*, 2015, pp. 1-2). For others, it is derided as an "intellectual cul de sac" (Delamont, 2009, p. 51). Haynes was combining sex with a methodology that attracts significant criticism and, sometimes, sarcasm and mockery (Campbell, 2017).

I too feel the weight of the double taboo. A great deal of work has been done to increase the public's understanding of mental health conditions, but we have far to travel. Disclosing my depression, through autoethnography, is the most risky piece of scholarship I have undertaken. However, I have one more element to add to this explosive mix. Here, I am not just writing about depression, using autoethnography. I am writing about depression, using autoethnography, in the context of the traditional, rational world of higher education. Mine is not a story about a past experience with an organisation I have long since left. It is a story about my relationship with academia – a relationship I intend to maintain for the remainder of my working life. I am torn between my desire to provide a rich, fully formed narrative for the academy, and the feeling that I need to protect myself from that very same organisation. As Haynes (2011, p. 141) notes, "It is somewhat of a paradox that an autoethnographer may increase the level of 'passion', detail and depth in the narrative while increasing her levels of vulnerability, exposure and disclosure, and hence leaving herself exposed to criticism and disapprobation, which go beyond the norms of scholarship to the competitive and masculine cultural norms of the public academic world".

Helpfully, a number of autoethnographers have written about techniques they have employed when faced with their own ethical quandaries. Influenced by Doloriert and Sambrook (2011), Ellis (2007) and Sparkes (2007), for example, I very seriously considered fictionalising my account. Instead of allowing you to read my diary entries, I could have constructed a tale, drawn from – but not entirely made up of – my own experiences. Like Sparkes (2007, p. 522), I could have invited you to read a story about "the struggles of a composite and mythical (perhaps?) academic at an imaginary (perhaps?) university in England". Of course, as you will have noticed, I did not follow that path. Rather, I read and re-read my diary entries, carefully choosing (and discounting) what to include. I omitted sentences I felt instinctively unable to share. I considered what I had already told family members and colleagues, and what I had kept from them. I visualised how I would answer questions about my illness, if asked by a stranger, a new friend, someone in senior management, and a student. In many ways, I was following Tolich's (2010, p. 1605) advice to novice researchers writing about a stigmatized experience – to "imagine dressing up in sandwich boards and walking around the university proclaiming their stigma".

Where Tolich and I differ is in our use of language. What he calls proclaiming stigma, I call opening a conversation on difficult matters. My experience with depression and anxiety is neither a weight on my shoulders, nor should it be. When I imagine traversing the university campus with my sandwich board, I am not followed by a bell-ringer crying "shame!". Where Tolich (2010) and I find a common ground, however, is in our shared appreciation that "like an inked tattoo" (p. 1605), once the autoethnography is published there is no going back. Perhaps it is the fear of the immortality of the published piece that has kept me coming back to this paper, staring at sections, lines and words, and wondering if I should take delete them, alter them, or if I should have ever written them in the first place.

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Protecting others

I do not exist in a vacuum. Even during my time away from work, I was still constantly coming into contact with people, whether that be family members, medical professionals, the shop assistant helping me negotiate the self-serve machine, the postman who knew I was always in the house to take neighbours' parcels, or my colleagues calling to see if I was okay. I had connections with each one of those individuals, however, fleeting. If you were to read the unedited versions of my diary entries, you might come across experiences I had with other people. You might read the words spoken to me. You might see my response. Yet, I made a conscious decision to remove all names from my diary entries and reduce the level of detail about third parties to a minimum.

The issue of relational ethics has been the most troubling aspect of my experience with autoethnography. This is not the forum for a detailed exploration of the ethics of writing about others. However, I offer a glimpse into my thought process in the hope it helps you to understand my position. I eagerly consume autoethnographic narratives across a range of issues but am often left wondering whether the desire to tell a complex, truthful story has been prioritised over the writer's responsibility to protect those who form part of the narrative (Campbell, 2017). In many cases, writers do not tackle ethics (in print at least), so, as a reader, I am unable to determine whether they have employed techniques to protect identities (they may well have done). At the other end of the spectrum, others are explicit about making the decision to reveal secrets about family members and close companions (see e.g. Ellis, 1995; Rambo Ronai, 1997). I sit somewhere in-between, making reference to people in my life but using no names, and changing details. Ultimately, I made a judgment call based on my gut feeling as to what was right. The unedited draft of this paper may have been richer, more truthful, but I was mindful that, on occasion, "the truth, it turns out, doesn't really set you free" (Gore, 2013, p. 66).

A new academic year: a new academic

An entire year has passed since I walked into work seriously unwell, and walked back out again, unable to return for three months. Today, I sit at my desk surrounded by management meeting agendas, scribbled notes about new initiatives, teaching timetables, student references and, of course, autoethnographic articles I want to read. I am busy, but I am well.

The depression started to lift before I decided to come back to work. When my free sessions with the University counselling service came to an end, I arranged a transfer to a local private fee-paying therapist. I had weekly, intense therapy sessions. I ran three times a week with a women's running group, just to get out of the house and speak to people. I was very poor at taking my prescribed medication and, as a consequence of putting on nearly two stone and deciding this was entirely the fault of the medication and not the copious bowls of chocolate flavoured rice cereal I consumed every hour, stopped entirely a few months after my diagnosis. I do not recommend this.

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A colleague once asked me what it was I needed to get better. The answer I gave then, and I still give now is time. I needed time to process everything that was going on in my head. I needed time to just stop. I needed time to breathe, and go running on a cold and muddy Friday night at 7 p.m., and to work through why I felt I had to do more and more and more and yet felt no joy when each goal was achieved. There was no "aha!" moment of clarity. Only a sense that I was getting better.

When I came back to work, I did so on an extended phased return, using my accrued holidays to make the transition as long as possible. I started at two days a week for the first two months, increasing to three for the third. Mental health illness is a funny thing. My second month back I gave a keynote speech in London. Eight weeks later, I had a panic attack, spent the morning pacing the office in tears trying to breathe through the fear, and had to admit to senior colleagues that I had agreed to do things that I was not really ready for. At some point (I cannot really remember when) I picked my professional doctorate back up again. The lever arch files now reside in a container to the right of a brand new writing desk and chair in our spare bedroom.

The anxiety remained, and still remains to this day. It is always there, lurking in the background, waiting for the opportunity to knock me sideways. For some time, I spoke about my illness as though it was in the past ("when I was poorly"). Now, I find it helpful to think of myself as "in recovery"; a dynamic process where some days will pass by without incident and others are characterised by worry and nightmares and making sure I have a therapy appointment lined up. But I have constructed a new identity, a new academic me. This academic does not say yes to everything. This academic does not have work emails on her phone. This academic does fun things with her partner at the weekend, instead of gazing hopelessly at lists that never end. I have rebuilt a relationship with my academic self that will allow me to continue my career.

Identity is a project. Today I continue to be a mentor, writer, speaker, influencer and woman on the rise, but within a new context of balance, satisfaction and enjoyment. Sounds a little utopian, does not it? But it is where I am today.

And, taking my cue from Tillmann (2009, p. 103; Tillmann-Healy, 1996, p. 107), I believe it is ethically right to end this story with a hopeful episode:

We're definitely going to have our engagement photo shoot with some animals. We just have to!! I mean, goats! Happy goats standing on plinths! That's what we saw today, when we went for a walk. And I genuinely, genuinely was not thinking about work at all. It was just us, looking at happy goats. I hadn't even checked my phone for ages. But then my bag vibrated, and I was pulled out of the animal-related merriment and into my phone messages. "Congratulations!" And then another one. "Quite right!!!!". I turned to him. "I think my promotion to associate professor has been approved". Of course, I couldn't flippin' read the confirmatory email because I no longer have work emails on my phone. But I just knew. And I was right. And the best thing about today was that I heard the news, felt happy, and then continued walking through the park chatting to him about our Netflix subscription, and how Linda McCartney makes the best vegetarian sausages, and what we're going to give out as favours at our wedding next year. And then I went home and didn't think about work. And then I fell asleep and didn't wake up at all throughout the night. I think I'm going to be okay. (August, 2017)

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"Apparently Being a Self-Obsessed C**t Is Now Academically Lauded": Experiencing Twitter Trolling of Autoethnographers

Elaine Campbell

Key words:
autoethnography;
trolling; social
media

Abstract: Online hostility and mockery, often known as "trolling," is a phenomenon almost as old as the internet itself. Nevertheless, the rise in trolling aimed at researchers using non-traditional, creative methodologies, such as autoethnography, remains severely under-explored. This essay seeks to fill the gap in the literature and make a contribution to the discourse on autoethnographic research. Writing autoethnographically, I share my experience of discovering vile, misogynist, and cruel trolling of autoethnographers and their work on the social media platform Twitter. I reflect on the online hatred I received when I raised the issue publically. Many of the messages I received focused on my perceived inability to cope with opinions other than my own. Therefore, I finish by offering a brief response to critiques of autoethnography; albeit criticism that comes from researchers who raise their concerns in a constructive and scholarly manner. Above all, the purpose of this essay is to bring trolling of autoethnographers to the fore and encourage others to speak about their experiences. If we do not write about trolling, then it—and our story—remains hidden.

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1. Prologue

Have you been on Twitter and searched for "autoethnography"? I have. There I found public shaming of autoethnographers, and sneering at journals publishing interpretive and creative research. The aggression toward autoethnographers on Twitter is best illustrated by the tweet that appears in the title of this essay: autoethnographers are "self-obsessed c**ts."¹ Sections 2 to 5 of this essay highlight the often gendered and misogynistic abuse aimed at researchers who utilize non-traditional methodologies, such as autoethnography. [1]

Not all of the tweets I found were hostile and venomous. Many engaged in healthy criticism, questioning the purpose and value of autoethnography as a research methodology. When I discarded the purely unpleasant personal tweets, looked beyond the hostile tone of some comments, and focused on the tweets containing healthy criticism I found three core accusations against autoethnographers. In Section 6, I respond to each indictment. I do so autoethnographically, laying bare my own doubts, struggles, and charges against myself, in the hope of presenting a continuing challenge to traditional, restrictive notions of research and the way we have access to and understand the world. [2]

2. Hello Twitter

In my empty office, free from the distraction of students and colleagues, I am in the zone. Autoethnography swells around me. Increasing numbers of articles, book chapters, snippets of blogs, presentations, and papers make their way across my desk, covering it like wallpaper. Table-paper. [3]

And the ideas! The ideas come out of me and flow straight into my grubby desktop keyboard. The space bar is sticky, no doubt made slow by some remnant of foodstuff that crept in there many months (years?) ago. Type, type, space, type, space, type, type, type. On and on I go. At speed. [4]

I write about how I came to hear the word autoethnography in a chance conversation with my research mentor in our shared corridor at work. How, later that evening, I found myself watching and re-watching a YouTube video of professors Carolyn ELLIS and Arthur BOCHNER, entranced by a method with storytelling at its core. The sort of storytelling that would "evoke readers to enter [your] experiences and feel what [you] felt" (ELLIS & BOCHNER, 2014, n.p.). ELLIS and BOCHNER argued for the researcher's personal experience, emotions and interactions to be the center of the narrative. Throughout the video, as though to demonstrate this approach, both told stories about their professional and personal lives, how they came to autoethnography, and the question of legitimacy in social science research. [5]

¹ The day I searched for "autoethnography" on Twitter, I came across a multitude of hostile tweets. I wrote some down. I could barely look at others. The tweets I refer to in this essay are constructs, amalgamations, and modifications of tweets I came across that day, and have subsequently seen. There was indeed a tweet that referred to "self-obsessed c**ts." That tweet did not include asterisks.

Type, type, type, type, space, type. And now, I've moved on. I'm editing a PowerPoint presentation called "What's the story, autoethnography?" There's a staff research seminar coming up soon, and I'm going to talk about my chosen methodology publicly, in open forum, to my colleagues for the first time. Hesitating for a moment, I think of the hundreds of autoethnographic articles I have read since my evening in the digital company of ELLIS and BOCHNER. I start to panic. How am I ever going to impart all I have come to know about autoethnography in one short presentation? The question "what is autoethnography?" seems so simple. The answer is anything but. [6]

With a quick movement of my computer mouse and a barely audible *click*, the PowerPoint retracts and a Word document—filled with text—flies to the fore. I sigh internally, grateful I had the foresight all those years ago to create what has become my most useful document to date. There it is, my trusty list of commonly used definitions of autoethnography. Glancing at the contents, my eyes select:

"Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)" (ELLIS, ADAMS & BOCHNER, 2011, §1).

"... a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context. It is both a method and a text, as in the case of ethnography" (REED-DANAHAY, 1997, p.9).

"... uses a researcher's personal experience to describe and critique cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences" ... "acknowledges and values a researcher's relationships with others"... "uses deep and careful self-reflection" (ADAMS, HOLMAN JONES & ELLIS, 2015, pp.1-2). [7]

Panic subsides. Okay, I can use these definitions to help me explain autoethnography to my colleagues. I can draw out key themes, like the way autoethnography calls for rich, self-introspection which links the personal to the cultural. I can list just some of the many ways in which autoethnographic accounts are produced: field notes (JENKS, 2002), story (TAMAS, 2011), novel (ELLIS, 2004), poetry (WYATT, 2016), performance (SPRY, 2001), and music (BARTLEET & ELLIS, 2013). [8]

Back to the PowerPoint. Back to being consumed by autoethnography. On and on it goes. Type, type, type, type, space, type. An hour passes quickly, and PowerPoint fatigue starts to set in. Time to check Twitter. Twitter is my favorite social media networking service, where registered users post and interact with messages or "tweets." Tweets are limited to 140 characters, and so are typically to the point. Registered users, of which I am one, create their own usernames that start with the "@" symbol. Many users remain anonymous, with no reference to their name, or any other identifying feature. My own username is a pun-filled reference to my life as a lawyer, and my natural inclination to rebel, although my profile shows my real name, the university where I work, and my photograph. [9]

I have over 700 "followers" on Twitter; users who will see my tweets appear on their own timeline (called a "feed") when they log in. Tweets can be forwarded or

"retweeted" by other users to their own feed. Users can also "like" individual tweets. Users are notified when someone re-tweets, replies to, or likes one of their tweets. I follow mostly my own tribe: lawyers, academics, educationalists. I also follow news outlets, left-leaning politicians, and (truth be told) late 1990s Britpop bands. [10]

Twitter is my digital common room (CAMPBELL, 2016a), always ready for me to pop my head around the door to see what's going on in the academy. Access is immediate. "What's going on?," I mutter to myself. Scroll, scroll, scroll. I see a link to an opinion piece on a new UK Teaching Excellence Framework. Then a comment on gender equality in academia. A colleague is also re-tweeting practical tips for students sitting exams. Most of the tweets in front of me are concerned with academic practice, on way or another. But that's not what I'm looking for today. I'm in the zone. I want more autoethnography. I type "autoethnography" in the search bar at the top right corner of my screen. My fingers are tired and I keep having to go back and retype, deleting "autoethnjnrapy" "authoethnograophy," until I get it right. I hit the return key, with purpose, and the "clunk" resonates around my vacant room. [11]

There's me! My smiling face stares back at the top of the screen. Alongside it, my Twitter profile: "Solicitor, Law Teacher. Writes on autoethnography and legal education. Yet to get over being mentioned in The Guardian Newspaper." Baffled as to why I'm looking at myself, I suddenly realize that it is because I have written "autoethnography" in my profile. I'm automatically elevated to the top of the search results. I emit a warm glow, happy that other Twitter users will be able to find me when they search for autoethnography. But there's no time for pride today. Move on. Short scroll down. There's a link to a blog talking about the autoethnography of learning. I've read it before, so I keep scrolling, all the while berating myself for not blogging more about autoethnography. [12]

Hang on. Back up. What was that? Scroll backwards. I stare at the screen, trying to take in what I've just read. I shift in the ill-fitting chair beneath me. My brow furrows. I wonder if I'm reading it wrong. Maybe it's like the time the assistant at the T-shirt printing shop, surrounded by garments adorned with personalized slogans and pictures, answered my request to have a T-shirt printed with "Oh no, we don't do *that* here" and I walked away unable to hear the mischievousness in her voice. Or the time my partner asked me who the BBC Radio 4 program Woman's Hour was aimed at and how long it lasted. And I replied earnestly "it's primarily for women, honey," followed by "and, well, it's usually just about an hour." And he stood there, cheeky grin and dimpled cheeks, finding my compulsion to give an accurate answer to questions amusing. I have the capacity to get things wrong, and to misjudge tone and mood. Perhaps that's what I'm doing here. But I don't think I am. [13]

This is what I'm staring at. A tweet, saying: "Writing an "autoethnographic" paper should lead to immediate termination." This is a response to another tweet by a user who self-identifies their account as being for intelligent, evidence-respecting academics. They have tweeted a screen shot of an extract from a conference paper

FQS <http://www.qualitative-research.net/>

where the author notes her work is autoethnographic. Alongside the screen shot, the intelligent, evidence-respecting academic Twitter user has written—seemingly to provoke their followers' ire—"This is an accepted conference paper." [14]

Quickly, I come across other tweets by the same Twitter user. Like ants, I see one, then another, then another, and then I cannot stop seeing them. Whomever is behind the account (it is anonymous) is on a roll. They have found an abstract from an article in an academic journal that publishes research addressing issues of social justice and education. The selected article explores the contradictions between the author's educational autobiography and the representations of schooling found in his school yearbooks. The Twitter brigade light up. "Look, here's a new research method. It's called going through your yearbooks and making up stuff," says one. "You've hit the nail on the head there. Its called 'autoethnography'. Its how idiots get PhDs" [sic]. Spurred on, others clamor to tell each other about the idiocy of the creative methodology that I love.

Some are mild: "man, autoethnography is the gift that keeps on giving, isn't it?"

Some are a little more aggressive: "Here's a definition of autoethnography for you. 'Creating a bunch of bullshit from something I did'."

And finally: "Just Googled autoethnography. Apparently being a self-absorbed c**t is now academically lauded" [15]

Journals publishing autoethnographic research are not immune from the Twitter hostility either. "I looked into this autoethnography. It gets over 400 hits in the journal 'Qualitative Inquiry'," exclaims a user in horror. Another replies (sarcastically I suspect) "That's one of the leading journals that promotes this 'innovative' methodology." Finally, a different user notes that the journal in question is "like a psychiatric ward that academics think is a resort. They can't wait to go there." I am not sure what this means, but I sense it is not a positive critique. [16]

The outpouring of venom is exhausting. I see a photograph of an extract of an autoethnographic paper published in a journal I admire greatly. Next to the photo, a user tweets "This is an academic with a PhD. Yes, really." The tweet prompts a comment that the journal in question is not a valid venue for research. This one stings. I am in the fortunate position of having an article accepted for publication in that journal. I think of the pages and pages of detailed, penetrating comments from the two anonymous reviewers, challenging me to deepen my work, develop my critical thinking, and widen my reading. I dive into my electronic "draft articles" folder and start scrolling through the article. I count. 27 pages, 94 footnotes, and 50 texts listed in the bibliography. Knowing full well it is ridiculous to base an article's merit on the number of footnotes, I push that to one side as I keep counting. Indignation takes over. How is this is "not research"? I growl to myself. How dare someone dismiss it so. [17]

My head feels warmer. My cheeks go numb. The space behind my eyes starts to ache. Am I upset that someone is finding fault with autoethnography? No. I am

not in the slightest bit surprised that criticism of autoethnography exists on Twitter. I have spent hours reading carefully crafted academic articles that argue autoethnography contributes to a reduction in qualitative standards (BUZARD, 2003; DELAMONT, 2009; FINE, 1999). I enjoy wrestling with that critique. It forces me to think intensely about how I can construct robust responses to questions about my methodological approach. No, I'm not upset by criticism. My body is reacting to the toxic nature of the intimidating tweets. The sarcasm, the sneering, the mockery. The public shaming. [18]

3. Trolling

Finding a consistent definition of trolling is an arduous endeavor. There is a lack of "clarity and agreement" about what constitutes a troll or trolling behavior (FICHMAN & SANFILIPPO, 2016, p.6). Differences occur in academic representations, and our understanding as to the nature of and implication of trolling diverges on a generational level (ibid.). Put simply, your version of trolling may be very different to mine. [19]

FICHMAN and SANFILIPPO provide a comprehensive list of scholarly and popular understandings of trolling. The differences are stark. HERRING, JOB-SLUDER, SCHECKLER and BARAB (2002, quoted in FICHMAN & SANFILIPPO, p.8) describe troll behavior as luring other users "into discussions that are pointless and distracting, particularly drawing inexperienced or naïve users by posting an incorrect or inappropriate, but noncontroversial, message." Trolling as a harmless distraction technique, if you will. Contrast that with SHACHAF and HARA's (2010, quoted in FICHMAN & SANFILIPPO, 2016) declaration that trolls "engage in intentionally repetitive and harmful actions, often in violation of policies, out of boredom, attention seeking, and the pursuit of entertainment, and in doing so, damage the community, content, and other people" (p.8). [20]

The fast-paced changing nature of technologically driven platforms may account for the differences in the way trolling is treated. In their list of definitions, FICHMAN and SANFILIPPO (2016) reported that Reddit—a website where users engage in numerous discussion boards—had this to say about trolling:

"Please remember what trolling is. The art of deliberately, cleverly and secretly pissing people off via the internet, using dialogue. Trolling does not mean just making rude remarks: Shouting swear words at someone doesn't count as trolling; it's just flaming, and isn't funny. Spam isn't trolling either; it pisses people off, but it's lame" (pp.7-8). [21]

I went to Reddit to locate the original source for the paragraph on trolling. I could not find it. I performed a website-wide search of the site for "troll" and "trolling" (using Reddit's own search engine). I found this:

"On any website with user-generated content, trolls will appear. The truth about the internet is that negative comments are unavoidable. If you receive completely unmerited negative comments, don't feel obligated to respond. Don't feed the troll.

Some people get a rise out of annoying people, and if you see a comment like that, you're better off ignoring it than giving it attention. Other Reddit users will also see these as trolls and will downvote these comments" (REDDIT, 2017, n.p.). [22]

Reddit's need to update its guidance on trolling so swiftly may be indicative of the speed with which we alter our comprehension of online behaviors. [23]

Bearing in mind the diversity in our understanding of what trolling is, I offer my own perspective. Not all of the Twitter users posting negative tweets about autoethnography could rightly be described as trolls. Some users raised interesting questions about rigor and validity, and engaged in meaningful pleasant discussion. However, where a Twitter user is specifically targeting a community, systematically mocking that community, and encouraging others to do the same, then this surely is the epitome of "trolling." It is behavior designed to damage and silence individuals and communities. [24]

4. Back to Twitter

I think about responding to the tweets as they flood my feed. Hovering over the reply button on the "c**t" tweet, my brain attempts to construct a response. But nothing works. My first reply is too whiney. Another too angry. And then I wonder if I want to spend my afternoon watching my cell phone light up with notification after notification. Do I want to get into an online fight? Not today. And in any event, I can't say what I want to say in the 140 characters Twitter demands. [25]

Months go by. I highlight the issues of Twitter trolling online in two magazine articles (CAMPBELL, 2016a, 2016b). The second is picked up by an anonymous account dedicated to exposing "idiotic" research and my work is disseminated to its 50,000 followers. What transpires feels like an unending (but is probably only a month long) period where I receive numerous direct and indirect online comments about me, my life, and my desire to "make my sociology degree work for something."² I am sent derisive and goading statements about my inability to withstand criticism. I am told that I am bound to feel bullied because my work is bullshit. My cell phone vibrates over and over again as more and more messages come flooding in, tidal wave after tidal wave. [26]

I am shocked at how quickly the comments turn personal. Individuals I do not know, and cannot identify, encourage their followers to scrutinize my Twitter account. I start to worry about being so visible on social media and making elements of my life public. I become paranoid that a photograph of my kitchen is still visible on my Twitter timeline and I delete it. I continue to go out running alone but spend the entire time planning how I would escape should a stranger jump out and attack me. I lock the door firmly when I get home each night. [27]

The bile feels never-ending. Comments start to appear on other forms of social media, not just Twitter. "Elaine Campbell should be relentlessly mocked," I read

² I have a law degree.

one evening on Facebook. Such statements receive digital applause in the form of "likes" or replies of a similar ilk. It hits me hard. I try not to look, but cannot help but spend my evenings trawling through the abuse. [28]

Ironically, it is when I am sitting quietly in my kitchen, the morning light spilling through the windows, that the most shocking comment arrives. I am not a woman of color. Yet one Twitter user assumes that I am. The focus of their negative critique of me and my scholarship is based entirely on gender and race. It is utterly unpleasant. Seeing this, my partner takes my cell phone from my hand, goes to my Twitter settings, and blocks contact from any user I do not follow. My notifications fall silent. [29]

5. Online Misogyny

Autoethnography offers a forum for researchers whose stories are often left out of traditional discourse. By engaging readers in first person accounts of experiences that are different, marginalized, or ignored, autoethnographers "help give a voice to the voiceless, the invisible to become visible and to make the differences noticeable" (SHORT, TURNER & GRANT, 2013, p.xi). I spent one afternoon looking at a Twitter account set up specifically as a bastion of "real" research, noting who and what was targeted as a subject for mockery. My list included (though was not limited to) the following examples: scholarship by queer black women, lesbian narratives, explorations of gender norms in hypermasculine spaces, autobiographical accounts by transgender persons, experiences of women of color in the academy, proponents of queer feminist theory, research into social construction of gender, and accounts of sexual harassment. Feminists and proponents of feminist theory were particular targets. Many of the academic papers referenced by the Twitter account were accompanied by comments such as "no evidence here, please—we're feminist scholars." Female academics were by no means the only recipients of this sarcasm. One man who had identified as a feminist was held in equal contempt. It strikes me that the marginalized experiences and complex insider accounts which autoethnography (and other creative methodologies) provide an insight into are the very narratives these online accounts and their followers are looking to shut down. In addition, there is a gendered bent to the online mockery, raising broader social questions regarding equality and discrimination. [30]

Online misogyny and hostility toward feminists is, sadly, widespread. In the UK, where I am based, I am especially aware of the experiences of the journalist Caroline CRIADO-PEREZ. In 2013, the Bank of England decided to replace Elizabeth FRY with Winston CHURCHILL as the historical figure on the English £5 note, leaving no women represented on the reverse of bank notes. CRIADO-PEREZ successfully lobbied to have Jane AUSTEN appear on a £10 note, replacing Charles DARWIN. She subsequently received approximately 50 sexually abusive tweets every hour (CRIADO-PEREZ, 2013, n.p.). At its peak, she reported getting one threat a minute, with men discussing how they will rape her, which parts of her body would be penetrated and how they were going to kill her. Writing in the *New Statesman* at the time, she said: "They are still coming in

now—the latest: a death-through-gang-rape threat where I'm told to 'KISS YOUR PUSSY GOODBYE AS WE BREAK IT IRREPARABLY'" (ibid.). [31]

Women who engage in video gaming have reported similar experiences. There is a growing body of literature commenting on the "symbolic annihilation" (HUNTEMANN, 2015) and positioning (BLODGETT & SALTER, 2012; TOMKINSON & HARPER, 2015) of women in game culture. An increase in the visibility of woman in the video gaming community has sadly been accompanied by a rise in misogynistic rhetoric (TOMKINSON & HARPER, 2015, p.617). I was not aware of the extreme levels of online abuse aimed at women "gamers" until one of the reviewers of this paper alerted me to it. I find the experiences of those women interesting for two reasons. First, it is a clear example of technology being utilized as an extension of the patriarchy (WAJCMAN, 2004, quoted in TOMKINSON & HARPER, 2015, p.626). Power structures are being played out online (TOMKINSON & HARPER, 2015, p.626), and those who seek to attack women or other minority groups are able to do so from the comfort of their own home behind a wall of anonymity. Secondly, within the gaming community I found another example of abuse directed at a woman seeking to work for gender equality and representation. Following the launch of a crowdfunding campaign for a series of short films exploring sexist gender stereotypes feminist gamer Anita SARKEESIAN was subject to a relentless online assault. In her 2012 TED Talk, SARKEESIAN noted that she had "sadly gotten used to sexist slurs and sexist insults" but this time she found herself targeted by a "massive online hate campaign" (2012, n.p.) with sexual assault, rape, and death threats. Her online accounts were consistently reported as spam and containing terrorist content. Her personal details, including her address, were circulated. The attackers even created an online game where participants could "beat the bitch"—the photograph of SARKEESIAN would become more battered and bruised with every "hit." Today, four years later, the comments on SARKEESIAN's TED Talk on YouTube are disabled, with the following message: "WHY ARE COMMENTS TURNED OFF? This talk comes from a woman who was targeted by an online hate campaign. Predictably, the same campaign has targeted this talk, so comments have been shut down" (ibid.). [32]

Compared to SARKEESIAN and CRIADO-PEREZ, I got off very lightly. My notifications are back on. Many of the tweets directed at me have since been deleted. You may have had a similar experience to mine, or perhaps you suffered worse. However, I do not know because, as people pursuing creative methodological approaches to research, we are not speaking about the online mockery we are subject to. Twitter abuse of autoethnographers has received little attention in the literature. As JANE (2014) notes, this may well be due to the fact that abuse of this nature is "heavily laced with expletives, profanity, and explicit imagery of sexual violence; it is calculated to offend, it is often difficult and disturbing to read" (p.558). I am, of course, aware of the mantra "do not feed the troll"—the implication being those who engage in trolling live off getting a response or rise. However, aggressive, toxic online discourse towards autoethnography exists. If we do not write about it, then it remains hidden—"blinding us to its existence and proliferation" (ibid.), or, worse, sanitized and

accepted. The cruelty I have seen online would not be accepted at a conference or seminar. Bullying needs to be called out. If sharing my story helps to bring this issue to the fore and encourages others to speak about their experiences, it will be worth the inevitable "e-bile" (ibid.) I may receive as a result. [33]

6. Healthy Criticism of Autoethnography: My Response

Not all of the tweets about autoethnography were bullying in tone. Many were questioning. Some were cynical. Others were humorously dismissive. Together, they projected "healthy criticism." When I discarded the purely unpleasant personal tweets, looked beyond the hostile tone of some comments, and concentrated on the tweets containing "healthy criticism" I saw a pattern emerge. Autoethnography was being rebuked for three reasons: narcissism, lack of scientific prowess, and dullness. [34]

What follows is my response to those grievances, and to the academic critique which—with greater skill, and less vulgarity than some of the tweets I viewed—identifies similar problems with autoethnography. To be absolutely clear, I do not equate scholarly criticism of autoethnography with trolling. It is one thing to be utterly against a methodology and present an articulate argument as to why you feel it is misguided. It is another thing entirely to call an autoethnographer a c**t. I have had doubts about autoethnography. Those doubts intensified when I read some of the tweets I have referenced in this essay. Initially, I was going to leave my thoughts on some of the criticisms of autoethnography to one side, and concentrate on my trolling experience. However, the tensions I have felt, and the way in which I have come to terms with the accusations I have made against myself are a fundamental part of this story. I have had many an internal conversation, going backwards and forwards, and struggling to reconcile my concerns. The following part of this essay sets out in writing for the first time my response to some of the criticisms made of autoethnography. [35]

6.1 "Diddling your pet hamster": The accusation that autoethnographers are narcissists

One twitter user noted that autoethnography was the "selfie" of academia. Along the same lines another—and my personal favorite—said that autoethnography was akin to "diddling your pet hamster." These tweets neatly sum up the principal criticism of autoethnography: self-indulgence. [36]

Focus on the self, according to FINE (1999), transforms "the intensive labor of field research into the armchair pleasures of 'me-search'" (p.534). While it was clear to me that FINE was using "me-search" as a rebuke, I rather took to the phrase when I first came across it. For many months, I used "mesearch" as shorthand when trying to explain autoethnography to those struggling to understand what my research was about. Having a cute go-to-phrase when discussing my work with colleagues and friends often provoked smiles, and sometimes a giggle. However, I soon started to feel uneasy about reducing my methodological approach to such a simple moniker. I grimaced when it appeared

in the media, even when, as in the case of REES' (2015) *Times Higher Education* article "Self-Reflective Study: The Rise of 'Mesearch'," the piece was designed to inspire the use of personal experience in academic work. In making light of autoethnography, I wondered whether I was encouraging others to conjure up an image of me lying feverishly back on a chaise longue, pen in one hand, the other laid on my forehead, overcome with the toil of narcissism. [37]

Rejection of self-representation in academia is not new. RICHARDSON (1990, 1992, 2000) in particular has written extensively about the suppression of creative, subjective voices in academic literature. She refers to the perpetual stream of "passive voice, absent narrator, long, inelegant, repetitive authorial statements and quotations; 'cleaned up' quotations, each sounding like the author; hoards of references; sonorous prose rhythms, dead or dying metaphors; lack of concreteness or overly detailed accounts; tone deafness" (RICHARDSON, 1992, p.131). In many ways, any writer adopting or replicating the values RICHARDSON riles against can appear "as a kind of unexcited peeping tom or voyeur" (GRANT, 2010, p.112) due to their dispassionate description of both purpose and experience ("This article aims to ...," "The researcher argues ..."). [38]

In stark contrast, researchers who write from an "emotional, first person stance" (TILLMANN-HEALY, 1996, p.80) directly call on readers to feel, react, discover, and care. Come into our world, they say. Come and experience what it is like, and then examine how you feel about it (CAMPBELL, 2016a). The examination part is important. The autoethnographic researcher does not want their work to be passively consumed (BOCHNER & ELLIS, 1996, p.24; TILLMANN-HEALY, 1996, p.8); they explicitly invite response. Embracing "The Ethnographic I" (ELLIS, 2004), writers can simultaneously create new understandings for themselves and for their readers. [39]

Traditionalists view the inclusion of a subjective, personal view as a contaminant, spoiling an otherwise pure piece of research. I see two problems with this line of reasoning. First, I question the narrative that contamination has thoroughly negative consequences. For me, WAKEMAN's (2014) work on the lives of heroin and crack cocaine users/dealers is an excellent example of positive contamination. Drawing on his own experiences of participant observation, WAKEMAN's autoethnography calls on "moments of emotionality" (p.709) derived from his experiences as a former user and dealer. By embracing his past and the emotions generated by his fieldwork, WAKEMAN helps us to *feel* an understanding of the drug users he encounters and the events in the field he recalls. His contamination adds depth, enriches understanding, and proffers insight. It leaves the blood in (MORIARTY, 2013). [40]

Secondly, I query whether it is possible to create authentically objective research, containing no trace of the author. Prior to starting our research, we are making choices when we consider the question(s) we are asking, the methodological approach we may seek to use, and the ethical ramifications. During the research, the language we adopt, the time we spend, and the way we approach analysis are all controlled by our individual characters and background. Who we are

infuses every stage of the research process. We may metaphorically hold a metal tea strainer across our research filtering out our personality and experience, but inevitably some part of us will fall through the gaps. For me, adopting contamination as a badge of honor is a way forward. "Yes, this is subjective," I say with a smile. "Yes, these are *my* experiences." ELLINGSON (1998) follows a similar line when she reassures her readers that her findings are "thoroughly contaminated" (p.494). As she notes, our personal and academic lives intersect. So, why try to keep them apart where this inhibits complex, rich, emotional research? [41]

In one sense, the Twitter user who equated autoethnography to taking a "selfie" is right. Autoethnography does require you to turn "the ethnographic lens" on yourself (O'REILLY, 2012, p.130). However, I am inclined to agree with SPARKES (2002) when he warns that labeling all autobiographical ethnography as self-indulgent is "a dangerous and threatening move" (p.213). SPARKES proposes that we might be seeing a new form of ethnographic practice "more firmly rooted in a social context and the situatedness of author-self" (ibid.). I hope this is the case. As we produce and consume more autoethnography our challenge is to champion deep and complex reflection which links to socio-cultural contexts and advances our understanding of the world. This should be how autoethnography is judged. Dismissing written self-portraiture outright is a disappointingly one-dimensional reaction that neglects to see the value in reflective scholarship. [42]

6.2 "Is it just 'stuff that happened to me'?: The accusation autoethnography is unscientific

I saw a number of tweets raising concerns about autoethnography's value as science. Reading those tweets, my mind's eye was instantly pulled back through time, quickly landing on the moment I first encountered DELAMONT's work. I saw her words in front of me, and, once again, felt worried about my place in the research world: "Of course a narrative can be entertaining or frightening or have a pedagogic purpose or be a great basis for poetry or drama or fiction ... but those are not the proper concerns of social science" (DELAMONT, 2012, p.544). [43]

DELAMONT is not the only academic to question the scientific merit of autoethnography. FINE (1999), for example, rallies against "personal reminiscences" (p.533), instead calling for "powerful and secure knowledge" (ibid.). BUZARD (2003), while noting that autoethnography is the "natural successor to discredited ethnographic modes" (p.61), concludes that autoethnographic practice is "uneven and under-theorized" (ibid.). [44]

FINE recounts the struggles facing ethnographers during the period when finding ethnographic work in leading journals was a "rarity" (1999, p.532). Promotion was unlikely. He recalls the need for "steely diligence" throughout such a "dour situation" (ibid.). Given that backdrop, I find it interesting that the strongest voices questioning the validity of autoethnography are ethnographers. [45]

If we look, even briefly, at the history of autoethnography, then there are clear parallels with the encounters FINE (1999, 2003) describes. My understanding of the rise of autoethnography comes primarily from ELLIS (2004), whether writing alone or with others (ADAMS et al., 2015; BOCHNER & ELLIS, 2016; ELLIS et al., 2011). She notes that only four decades ago, the accepted view of research practice focused on the separation between the researcher and their research. Even in sociology, "little or no attention" (ELLIS, 2004, p.15) was paid to the researcher's experience, "except to establish guidelines for how they should act so as to not bias their stories" (ibid.). Researchers were explicitly encouraged to rid their work of any trace of subjectivity or personal view. ELLIS (2004) draws on artifacts from her past to evidence this. Her ragged, smudged handout from a 1975 graduate class states: "Ideally one's field notes should be such that an independent reader could take them and arrive at the same inferences and explanations as oneself" (pp.15-16). Exploration of the researcher's experience was not a legitimate path to pursue, not in your published work at least. [46]

The traditional representation of qualitative research offered little to ELLIS and others like her, who—during what has become known as the "crisis of representation" (MARCUS & FISCHER, 1999, p.7) or "crisis of confidence" (ELLIS et al., 2011, §2)—in the 1980s and 1990s looked to interpretivist forms of research which placed the researcher at the heart of the research. Yet, importantly, at first ELLIS was committed to showing what she was doing was scientific. She was "significantly affected" by DENZIN's review of her article (ELLIS, 1991) which referred to her writing as schizophrenic (BOCHNER & ELLIS, 2016; ELLIS, 1995). DENZIN made the point that ELLIS seemed to be "caught between two camps" (BOCHNER & ELLIS, 2016, p.30); she was at simultaneously trying to be scientific *and* fight for interpretive inquiry. The review appears to have been a seminal moment for ELLIS, who wrote that it contributed to her own transition "to trust the work that gave meaning to [her] life" (BOCHNER & ELLIS, 2016, p.30). [47]

I continue to struggle to reconcile the tensions I feel about autoethnography as science. On the one hand, I want to argue that drama, narrative, and fiction can be valid forms of science. Crafting the words that fully realize my story takes much longer than any traditional research essay I have written. Rather than lacking intellectual rigor, as DELAMONT (2007, 2009) charges, my experience is that autoethnographic research requires robust patience, deep introspection, and the ability to regularly (re)visit and (re)view your own epistemological and ontological position. Those were the words I wished I had found when I was asked if my research was "just Bridget Jones's Diary." Moments before the question, I had finished the first public presentation of my proposed autoethnographic doctoral research, and I was secretly very proud of my performance. The room was small and packed with eminent researchers and senior members of staff called upon to listen to and support new entrants to the doctoral program. I stood in the center of the room, my A3 poster stuck on the wall directly behind me, strong and focused and passionate about my work. Eschewing the traditional poster design, mine had a large red heart right in the middle containing the word "autoethnography." The audience was so close.

Waving my arms around like a conductor as I spoke, I pulled my colleagues into the new world I had uncovered. My questioner, of course, was only trying to help. The inquiry was completely reasonable, especially given the novelty of the methodology. But the laughter that accompanied the reference to FIELDING's infamous fictional diary (1996) hurt. The heart, a visual representation of my love for autoethnography, instantly became silly. My passion transformed from powerful oratory into childlike enthusiasm. [48]

On the other hand, I find myself battling again the notion that my research needs to conform to labels such as "science." I am not alone. BOCHNER (2000) explains that there is no right way of doing social science research (and, in our preoccupation with rigor, we "are neglectful of imagination" (p.267). Perhaps we are constrained by the limits of our imagination, only finding substance in research that reflects our own ideals. FINE (2003) explicitly uses this language to explain his thoughts on autoethnography. He notes that other forms of ethnographic research do not "reflect the ideal" (p.58) by which he thinks research should be undertaken. Other forms of ethnography simply "diverge from [his] own ethnographic program" (ibid.). [49]

Some days I pursue validity through scientific "status." Other days validity is a false icon. In this middle place, wanting to be part of the club but then rejecting externally-imposed criterion, I embody the impossible struggle of attempting to "do" the "right" research. [50]

6.3 "I get it's writing about yourself, but what if you don't have anything interesting to say?": The accusation that autoethnographers are uninteresting

Some tweets focused on the notion that writing about yourself led to dull and boring research. DELAMONT (2007) makes a similar point when she notes that "we're not interesting enough to write about" (p.3). Of course, what one person finds fascinating, another will balk at, and it may be that the autoethnography the twitter users and DELAMONT have read would fail to capture my imagination too. However, classifying all autoethnographers' emotional experiences as uninteresting strikes me as being unfair. [51]

I documented my first experience with an autoethnographic text in CAMPBELL (2016b). There, I included a vignette which captured my experience reading ELLIS and BOCHNER's (1992) abortion story. It was, for me, a visceral experience. I was with the authors as they twisted and turned through their decision to terminate a pregnancy ten weeks into their relationship. I was with them as they entered the hospital. I felt all of the conflicting emotions and the physical pain. In the end, I was so overcome that I had to find a seat on the train I was traveling on. It was the closest I have ever come to passing out. ELLIS has said that the goal was to "lead readers through a journey in which they have an experiential sense of the events and know what it must have felt like" (ELLIS & BOCHNER, 1992, p.80). In me her goal was realized. [52]

I omitted one fact from my vignette. I thought I could be pregnant. But, in the back of my mind, I knew the truth—I was not. Why is this important? Why choose to tell this story now? For me, motherhood is an unlikely event. Multiple persistent symptoms, ovarian scan data, blood tests—all foretell fertility problems. ELLIS and BOCHNER's (1992) autoethnographic work magnified my conflicting thoughts on parenthood. Would it change my outlook on my working life? Would I become less ambitious? How would I fit in my morning writing routine? How would I complete my PhD? Would I end up rushing to pick up my child from the nursery rather than reading the latest research? Would my known identity disappear to be replaced by "mum"? I spent the journey reading the story and asking questions of my own. Selfish, trivial, but honest questions, relating to a life that did not exist. [53]

Persuading someone that a piece of writing is interesting is a complex, some might say futile, task. What I would argue is the power of the personal story should not be underestimated. Naturally, we will be drawn to stories that resonate with us. I, for example, specifically seek out autoethnography situated in the educational world. Nevertheless, that is not to say other autoethnographic works provide little reaction in me. CUSTER's (2014) autoethnography on the sexual abuse he suffered as child is one of the most difficult pieces of research I have ever read. For a long time, I could not revisit it, and only did so because I wanted to speak about it in a staff seminar on autoethnography I was leading. The first person account of the abuse was not the part that I struggled with. Rather, it was the conflict within the 11 year old CUSTER as to how he felt about the abuse. Lines like, "The callous touch of Tom's hand on my penis is making me feel excited and also disgusted, but I give into the sexual tension of the moment" (p.5) are incredibly challenging. Alongside "sacrilegious" (p.3) descriptions of Jesus Christ, CUSTER invites us into his "raw and uncouth" personal narrative. In doing so, CUSTER reveals what he calls the "true beauty" (p.7) of autoethnography: a means to convey life. His autoethnography reminds me of BRIDGENS' (2007) thoughtful comment that stories can be "ignored, distorted, or silenced" (pp.4-5) due to the discomfort they cause. [54]

7. Farewell, and Hello Again

"I'm really nervous about this one" I say, shifting from one leg to another as though trying to keep warm.

"You'll be great," says Lisa, my colleague and fellow ethnography enthusiast, "You're a really good speaker."

She means it. I know it's true. Yet we continue the dance of praise and modesty.

"Hmm, but I'm normally so organized. And I don't feel ready. And look who's here. God I feel sick," I say, trying not to look my colleagues in the eye as we wait for the lecture hall to be free. They have not heard me speak about autoethnography before.

Lisa counters, "You know autoethnography. No-one else here *knows* it like you!"

I smile. I know it's true. "God I feel sick," I repeat.

"Sick, sick, sick," I sing to myself. [55]

We wait, Lisa and I, in silence for a few moments, wondering when we'll be able to go in and get ready for our presentations. I have not asked Lisa how she feels about speaking for the first time about her research. I won't realize this omission until later on in the evening, when it pops into my head while I'm curled up on my sofa at home listening to the children playing in the street outside.

"Hey," I say, "Do you want to see something I found on Twitter?"

"Yeah," she says, glad for the distraction. [56]

I gesture to a nearby table, and we quickly walk over to it. I open my laptop, click on the Google icon and then the Twitter shortcut at the top. Up comes my Twitter timeline. Both of our eyes dart to the list of "trending" topics, momentarily side-tracked by the latest news and celebrity gossip.

"There's this account," I say, "This awful account. It's about research. It shames people for their research."

"What? That's mad," Lisa says, watching me type the name of the twitter account into the search bar.

"Yeah, I know. I'm finding it now. Wait 'til you see it." [57]

But the account does not appear on the screen. The "waiting" icon twirls round and round and round. We stare at the screen, seemingly possessed by the rotating circle. Eventually it stops and a new screen appears: "Account Suspended: This account has been suspended. Learn more about why Twitter suspends accounts, or return to your timeline."

I grimace. "It's not here," I say, "It's been ... suspended?" I try searching for it again, but get the same message.

"I need to find it," I say. [58]

Lisa looks at me. She is both bored and anxious to get on with her presentation. Seeing another colleague approach, she says "Erm, there's Nick. I need to speak to him before he goes to Berlin. I'm just going to have a quick chat with him, okay?"

"Hmmm," I murmur, not really listening to her anymore. I'm still typing different phrases into the Twitter search, desperately looking for any trace of the account. Aha! There's someone moaning about it disappearing. "Where's it gone?" they ask. Good question, I think. [59]

Biting the inside of my mouth, I keep searching for more references to the suspended account. I see accounts which have similar names, but I ignore them. Eventually, it dawns on me that I should take a look at them.

I look. Annoyed with my lack of common sense, I give myself a mental kick.

Of course. Of course others would take up the mantle. Cut off one of the Hydra's heads, and two more emerge from the fresh wound. And here they are, snarling and twisting and snapping at me. Pointing and shaming. Laughing and mocking. Chatter around me increases. People are moving forward, through the doors of the lecture hall. I glance around for a friendly face. No-one notices me. I feel small, an outsider in my own faculty. I wait until most have gone in. My head lowered, I push on the heavy wooden door, taking a deep breath. I silently repeat the words. My name is Elaine and I'm an autoethnographer. My name is Elaine and I'm an autoethnographer. My name is Elaine and I'm an autoethnographer. [60]

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Should I Share My Journal Entry With You? A Critical Exploration of Relational Ethics in Autoethnography

ABSTRACT Journal entries documenting hidden emotions about my dual role as law teacher and practicing lawyer provide powerful insight into an aspect of academic practice not yet considered by autoethnography. But my stories are a consequence of my interactions with students. How do I negotiate the desire to give voice to a hidden world, yet protect the bonds of trust? This essay critically explores relational ethics in autoethnography from the unique perspective of a law clinic supervisor. Drawing on lessons from memoirists, personal reflections, and an unexpected dialogue with Carolyn Ellis, I raise important questions about my own ethical dilemma. **KEYWORDS** Autoethnography; Ethics; Higher education; Clinical supervision

THE JOURNAL ENTRY

On the morning of 27 October 2014, I walked into my office, a large room I share with two other academics. My colleagues' heads were down as they prepared for another day of lectures and seminars. We exchanged a polite "morning!" Then I took off my coat, sat down at my desk, and wrote 407 words in my reflective journal. My pen worked quickly. The words flowed. Thoughts that had circled my brain throughout the morning commute spilled onto the page; part fervent rage, part satisfied relief.

Highly subjective and full of passion, I wrote intensely and honestly about my emotions. My words unveiled frustration with my students, confusion about my academic role, and the negative effect those issues were having on my home life. Then I closed the journal and carried on with the rest of the day.

Should I share those words with you?

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

At the start of my journey as an autoethnographer, I reveled in the vivid stories that emerged trance-like when I sat down with my reflective journal. Clifford Geertz said that "thick description" held the key to understanding cultures.¹

Departures in Critical Qualitative Research, Vol. 6, Number 4, pp. 4–22. ISSN 2333-9489, electronic ISSN 2333-9497. © 2017 by the Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved. Request permission to photocopy or reproduce article content at the University of California Press's Reprints and Permissions web page, <http://www.ucpress.edu/journals.php?p=reprints>. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1525/dcq.2017.6.4.4>.

In the same vein, Kathryn Haynes argues that stories give us access to our own ontology.² I strongly felt that my journal entries brought these two ideas together. Through my rich personal narrative, I believed that I could open the door to a hidden world and examine my own sociocultural experience. My plan was to document both mundane and unusual moments, and gain an insight into myself and my culture.

The journal entries built in number, but so too did my sense of unease. I queried whether it was ethically appropriate to record, and ultimately communicate, my own views and feelings when they were facilitated through and driven by interactions with others. In my case, “others” include university students. I am an Associate Professor at a university based in the northeast of England. An experiential educator; I do not teach by way of lecture, seminar or workshop. Instead, I supervise students engaged in a clinical legal education program. My students are in the final year of their undergraduate law degree. They work in a legal office situated at the heart of the law school and are assessed on the delivery of free legal advice to members of the public. The office runs just like any other lawyers’ practice.³ As a clinical supervisor, I am charged with guiding my students as they engage in real-life legal practice.

Clinical legal education scholarship has yet to discover autoethnography as a research method and methodology. However, there is also a surprising lack of autoethnography located in the university classroom generally. By applying autoethnography to the world of clinical supervision, my intention was (and continues to be) to address the gap and facilitate greater understanding of the culture of law clinic supervision. I was excited that my initial journal entries provided an intimate account of my role. However, those entries were entirely dependent on the supervisory relationship with my students. I was not just writing about myself. My students were also “visible participants” in my study.⁴

One day, my concerns became so strong that I stopped in my tracks whilst journaling. I said: “I stop writing because I’m worried about this journal. Is it okay to write about this stuff? What if someone reads it?”⁵ As I wrote those words I finally realized that keeping a personal diary was entirely different from recording reflections as part of an autoethnographic study. I also knew that the “someone” referred to my students. My anxiety lay in the notion that my students would be adversely affected by what I had written. My thoughts at the time were:

If I share my 407 word journal entry, how will my students react to my words? Will they query if and how my emotions affected my assessment of

their work? Will they wonder at the efficacy of my supervision? Might they have cause to complain about my appraisal of their behaviour, skills, and commitment? But if I don't share the journal entry, then what is the point in pursuing autoethnography?

In this essay, I present a critical exploration of relational ethics in autoethnography. I come to the debate with a perspective not yet considered in the literature. My dual role as a teacher and qualified lawyer allows for a new frame of reference, and a fresh consideration of the use of others in accounts of lived experience. Using my journal entry dilemma, and drawing lessons from life writing, experienced autoethnographers, and my own reflections, my aim is to engage in a challenging discussion about autoethnographic ethics.

FOR THE LOVE OF AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

I knew that I loved autoethnography 15 minutes after pressing play on a YouTube video featuring Carolyn Ellis and Arthur P. Bochner.⁶ At the time, and rather shamefully now, I had no idea who the friendly faces on the screen were. In fact, it was merely by chance that I came across the video. I had heard the word "autoethnography" earlier in the day, so I decided to type it into a Google search. The video was fairly near the top of the list of results. I put it on in the background as I was tidying my house.⁷

I already leaned towards narrativity. But, like Clair Doloriert and Sally Sambrook, I felt I had to "settle rather incompletely and frustratingly" for terms such as "reflexive approach" or self-reflection.⁸ Now, the voices of Ellis and Bochner informed me that, through autoethnography, I could explore my lived experience as a clinical supervisor. I wrote in my personal diary that I had "found my island." I am not alone in feeling this way. Ruth Wilkins "found home" in autoethnography, whilst Katharine Dashper was "drawn in," "shocked" and "moved" by its power.⁹

At the time, I did not fully appreciate the substantial number of "similarly situated terms" that could be used alongside or as alternatives to autoethnography.¹⁰ I used autoethnography as a catch-all. Later, I delved further into the details behind the word by listing the common definitions I came across during my reading and highlighting words and phrases that appeared most often. They were: write or writing, experience or personal experience, culture or cultural, and story. Curious to see if my mind had "skipped" any other words, I placed the definitions in an online word cloud creator.¹¹ My word clouds looked like this:



FIGURES 1-2. Word clouds representing common words used in definitions of autoethnography. Images provided by author.

Autoethnographers employ different methods and styles. A non-exhaustive list includes performance, diary entries, fictional stories, personal narrative, story of stories, and novel.¹² Yet, they all have one thing in common. And that is represented by the word I missed: *Within*. I missed *within*. I saw "culture" and I saw "story," but *within* was superfluous, inconsequential, nothing. And indeed, as the word clouds show, within is not the most frequently used word in the definitions I listed. However, it is, I would argue, the glue that sticks all the pieces of autoethnography together. Our writing stories and our personal experience of culture

come from inside ourselves. In this essay, I am going to continue to use autoethnography as a term of reference. However, I recognize that there is no one way of doing it, only that whatever "it" is, it comes from within.

Much like the metaphors about home, I am not the first person to use the word "love" when describing a relationship with autoethnography. Perhaps it is because autoethnography allows writing from deep within to surface that I feel such an emotional connection to it. Kristina Medford agrees with this, concluding that she loves autoethnographic writing because "no other form of academic writing" affects her "so deeply" or causes her "to think so critically."¹³ Traditionally, academic writing is full of

passive voice; absent narrator; long, inelegant, repetitive authorial statements and quotations; "cleaned up" quotations, each sounding like the author; hoards of references; sonorous prose rhythms, dead or dying metaphors; lack of concreteness or overly detailed accounts; tone deafness; and, most disheartening, the suppression of narrativity.¹⁴

The personal voice remains silent; wounds are hidden. In stark contrast, autoethnographic writing embraces emotion, relationships, humanity, and subjectivity. As Elizabeth Dauphinee declares:

I write out of love. I also sometimes write out of guilt. In all cases I write because I become aware that something is not the way I thought it was. Something has hurt me. Something has made me angry or sleepless or aggrieved in some way.¹⁵

There is the story within, again.

BUT, IT IS NOT AN UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

"Jumping On and Off the Runaway Train of Success" was one of the first pieces of autoethnographic writing I read.¹⁶ The article is a brilliantly evocative account of the daily toil of academia. From the start, we are on the runaway train with Ellis, clinging on to the inside of the unstable vehicle that takes us faster and faster down a track where "there is always one more article to revise, student to counsel, committee on which to serve, paper to grade, letter of recommendation to write, and book to read."¹⁷ A deeply personal story; Ellis lets us see her 3 a.m. nightmares, feel her increasing frustration with students, read emails from overworked colleagues, listen to conversations with senior colleagues about workload, and experience the voices in her head as they berate her as "the worst kind of whiner."¹⁸

I found “Jumping On and Off the Runaway Train of Success” compelling. For the first time, a journal article spoke to me and my own experiences as an academic. I wanted to share it with all of my close colleagues—“*Look! Look!! Here is someone who is feeling how we are feeling and has written about it in a journal. An actual academic journal!*” In *The Ethnographic I*, Ellis says autoethnography allows others to enter your world and use what they learn there to reflect on, understand, and cope with their own life.¹⁹ This happened to me when I read her academic autoethnography. Firstly, I reflected on my own workload and the difficulties I had attempting to “do it all.” Secondly, I began to appreciate that elevation to Professor did not decrease these difficulties. Finally, I considered Ellis’s methods of coping and analyzed whether what she did would help me going forward. Because of Ellis’s words, I no longer felt abandoned and companionless as I bumped along the track in my own runaway train. I reveled in the strength of the emotion and the honest depiction of the stressed-out academic.

At the same time, I was plagued with concerns. As a starting point, I queried how Ellis could write about her students’ “lack of preparation” and “poorly crafted” work.²⁰ I wondered how her former students would feel about this characterization of their performance. I was also apprehensive about the inclusion of staff members in the story. In one section, Ellis replicates her junior colleague’s “stress-filled” email. The email beautifully describes how it feels to be slowly chipped away: “death by many small paper cuts.”²¹ Yet, I thought, “*When pressing ‘send’ did that colleague imagine it would end up in print? Had Ellis obtained her consent to do so?*”

Autoethnography appeared in my life in September 2014. A year later, I had read over 50 autoethnographic articles. The more I read, the more troubled I became. At best, I felt ethics was somewhat sidelined. At worst, I speculated whether autoethnography was being used to side step ethical issues. Kip Jones, for example, uses this language when he recalls that he “wondered about performing the stories of others. . . then sidestepped this issue by using [his] own story instead.”²² My concern is that autoethnographic work will always involve others. We may not name them and they may not be lead characters in our play, but our experience and history is shaped by our interactions with people. Take Ruth Ernst and Jocene Vallack’s account of the detrimental effect of a new assessment-driven system on the children they taught. It is a chilling narrative, written by dedicated teachers who clearly want to do the best for their charges.²³ Originally, they say, the plan was to investigate the new curriculum through

other means.²⁴ The ethics committee denied the request. So, instead they wrote an autoethnographic article that did not require ethical approval because it did not involve co-researchers. Their intent is clear—autoethnography gives them “license” to write their story.²⁵ However, it is not just their story. It also belongs to the students, parents, and co-workers whom they use to show the consequences of poor management and quashed creativity.

Laurel Richardson’s reflections on the ethics of autoethnography crystallized my concern that autoethnography could be used as a tool to air personal grievances.²⁶ She notes that she self-censors some work for fear of damaging family relations.²⁷ However, she sees “no problem” in publishing stories that may reflect badly on administrators as she considers “the damage done by them far greater than any discomfort my stories might cause them.”²⁸ I am not at all suggesting that Richardson (or anyone else for that matter) does this, but at the time I mused whether it was possible that writers *could* use autoethnography as a form of revenge.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education is an “increasingly popular” topic for autoethnographers.²⁹ Contributions include student and supervisor perspectives of doctoral supervision, being an academic workaholic, bullying in the workplace, post-PhD career change, and the emergence of an audit culture.³⁰ Another popular subject is the challenge of doing autoethnography in the academy.³¹

Despite these welcome additions to the literature, one is less likely to find autoethnographers exploring the day-to-day realities of teaching in higher education. Ellis’s autoethnography of academic life is a clear exception to that rule. There are also interesting examples about supervising music and teaching research.³² However, there is certainly some way to go before the academic community fully embraces Ronald Peltas’s request to “write from the heart,” especially where teaching is concerned.³³

University law lecturers have ignored autoethnography altogether. Thirteen years ago, Elizabeth Mytton employed the biographical method to inform our understanding of the lived experience of six law teachers in the United Kingdom.³⁴ In using this method, Mytton explicitly made “a deliberate departure from more traditional research methods in legal education”³⁵ so that readers could understand the “epistemological shifts in the academy” and “accentuate a new perspective on law teaching.”³⁶ I have argued elsewhere that legal education lends itself well to autoethnography.³⁷ Sadly, other law lecturers have failed to follow Mytton’s lead and make use of auto/biographical methodologies. My hope is that we will come

to utilize autoethnography to provide a deep insight into our teaching function; how we build connections with our students, our responses to students of varying abilities and needs, our pastoral mentoring role, and the characters we adopt for different educational scenarios.

THE PROBLEM WITH SHARING: REVEALING WAVES BENEATH STILL WATERS

Given my desire to see autoethnography employed by other academics, it may seem odd (or even contrary) that I have so many doubts about sharing my journal entry with you. My reticence to disclose the words is shaped by my identity as an experiential educator. I supervise law students who work in a legal clinic, the Student Law Office, throughout the final year of their degree. The Student Law Office is a real solicitors' practice, not a simulation. It is the capstone of a university degree program that emphasizes learning through doing. As a supervisor I am required to continuously assess my students' performance as they provide free legal advice to the public. The assessment naturally includes legal skills such as research, letter writing, and interviewing. However, it also captures soft skills such as professionalism, commitment, teamwork, and autonomy.³⁸

Clinical supervision is a world away from traditional teaching. In fact, I do not tend to think of it as teaching. The role of the clinical supervisor is a peculiar combination of mentor, colleague, and even friend.³⁹ Working together on a daily basis, with the common goal of advising a client, leads to something more complex than the usual teacher–student dynamic. For example, if a student does not attend a lecture, this primarily is their lookout. If a student does not attend the clinic, this affects a number of other people. It affects the student's partner (students are grouped into pairs), who may be burdened with an increased workload. It affects the client, who may not receive legal advice within the time expected. It affects the supervisor, who will need to find out why the student has not attended, speak to the student's partner, devise a strategy for dealing with the legal work going forward, take up some of the work herself if required, and plan for if the student does not return. The practical considerations are also accompanied by more emotive matters. The supervisor asks herself: How will this affect the student's assessment? What should I be doing to try to help this student overcome any difficulties? How can I support the student's partner, but also balance the fact that the legal work needs to be done? If the AWOL student comes back at a later date, should I give them another client? If I do, this means I have to take on more supervisory work too—do I have the

time to do this? These questions do not occur if a student merely neglects to attend a lecture or two.

The clinical supervisor and her students must trust each other. The supervisor trusts her students to act in accordance with the professional standards of a lawyer. This includes carrying out their legal work with diligence and acting in the best interests of their clients. She trusts the students to keep within the confines of the policies and procedures of the clinic; to maintain confidentiality, keep files and records in their proper place, check basic elements such as addresses lest a letter be sent to the wrong person, and refrain from providing advice to the client without checking the precise details with her first. Conversely, students must trust their supervisor to guide them throughout their time in the clinic. Students expect and need their supervisor to be available so they can ask questions. The supervisor also has a duty to check her students' work in good time, so matters can be progressed and feedback taken on board. Each memo, letter, telephone plan, research report, email, covering note, legal document, strategy meeting, and client conference can form another developmental milestone for the student. The supervisor continuously assesses the student; her feedback is fundamental to that student's development—professionally and personally—during their time in the clinic. The supervisor is not just a teacher. She is the students' gateway to an unfamiliar professional world beyond the university. Students use the supervisor to gain knowledge of the new world and seek advice, support, and encouragement on career-related issues.

Behind the scenes the supervisor is furiously working to catch up. She is fighting to get through the piles of documents that are being sent to her to check, whilst answering emails with queries about the case, concerns about partnerships, questions about job applications and interviews, and difficulties with personal matters that are affecting attendance and/or quality of work. To the students, she must appear the swan gliding on the smooth surface of the water, even though underneath tidal waves are constantly pushing and pulling her.

In my 407-word journal entry from 27 October 2014, I allow the reader to put on a pair of goggles and peer under the water to see my frantically kicking legs. They see my lived experience, so often brushed aside or sanitized in the literature. To me, the journal entry contains a visceral example of the practical and emotional intensity of being a clinical supervisor. Yet, I hesitate to share it because it is not just my story. When I wrote it, everything I was feeling was a consequence of the interactions with my students. The journal entry exposes my inner voice: complaining, frustrated, sad, and angry—not just with myself but with a situation that had come about because of my role as a clinical supervisor.

I am concerned that by sharing the entry I will hurt those students. They trusted me to be their guide throughout the year. How would they feel if confronted with the realities behind my patient smile and my steady hand?

G. Thomas Couser draws on the professions, especially medicine (and in particular biomedicine), when he reflects on the ethics of life writing.⁴⁰ I am enticed by his characterization of the relationship between writer and source as being “fiduciary”; that is, based on trust.⁴¹ While he uses the example of the connection between physicians and patients,⁴² the word fiduciary is immediately recognizable to me as a lawyer. A fiduciary relationship is at the heart of the bond between lawyer and client, and, as a phrase, it appears in numerous legal principles.

A fiduciary takes care of matters for another person. There are clear parallels with my feelings about my students. I am compelled as a lawyer to act in others’ best interests and to take care—the same applies to my role as a teacher. But Couser provides a caveat: collaborations may be thought of as fiduciary relationships “in life writing scenarios involving particularly *vulnerable subjects*.” Examples include being a child, a member of a disadvantaged minority, ill, or disabled.⁴³ This begs the question: are my students vulnerable? Some do have illnesses, disabilities, or are part of a minority group, and I am naturally inclined to protect them. However, would a reasonable person when asked to list vulnerable groups go straight to university students? I am not convinced. Yet, all is not lost when it comes to the fiduciary argument. For Couser also notes that intimacy entails a “degree of vulnerability.”⁴⁴ He is referring not to an amorous relationship but to one that involves “emotional intimacy” or “relational proximity.”⁴⁵ When viewed in this way, the supervisor–student connection becomes one heavy with potential for vulnerability, and it is therefore in keeping with Couser’s fiduciary depiction.

Of course, the context of Couser’s book is life writing—the collaboration with another to tell their life story. Whilst this is not my intention with my autoethnographic writing, I cannot help but consider that my fiduciary duties as a dual-role lawyer and teacher underpin both my ethical concerns and my desire to keep the turbulent waves under the water.

RELATIONAL ETHICS

Ellis calls the relationship between the researcher and the community in which they exist “relational ethics.” It requires autoethnographers to “act from our hearts and minds, to acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others, and initiate and maintain conversations.”⁴⁶ The question at the core of my inner turmoil is neatly summed up as: “How do we honor our relational responsibilities yet

present our lives in a complex and truthful way for readers?"⁴⁷ Although I recognize that there are others, I would like to focus on two techniques that may assist: fictionalization and process consent.

Fictionalization

When writing about her relationship with Gene Weinstein in *Final Negotiations*, Ellis considered issues of trust as I have done.⁴⁸ In order to cherish her "implicit relational trust provision," she "omitted things, occasionally changed details of a scene, and invented composite characters to protect identities."⁴⁹ Fictionalization—intentionally adding and excluding events and/or combining "characters"—is one technique autoethnographers can use to blur the lines and preserve the identity of others. An excellent example of this is Andrew C. Sparkes's fictional account of life at an imagined university, the University of Wannabee Academic.⁵⁰ We follow Jim as he attends meetings with the Vice-Chancellor about staff publications, breaks bad news to colleague Paul whose outputs have been deemed derisory, tries to escape from research impact-factor-obsessed Steve (known as the Weasel), and confers with Dr. Marriot, consultant psychiatrist.⁵¹ Although the people and scenarios portrayed are fictional constructs, Sparkes reveals that the constructive process was "inspired by partial happenings, fragmented memories, echoes of conversations, whispers in corridors, fleeting glimpses of myriad reflections seen through broken glass, and multiple layers of fiction and narrative imaginings."⁵²

A number of writers in Joy Castro's edited collection, *Family Trouble*, discuss the cost of writing about identified others. "When publishing memoir," Castro says, "writers pay the price of transparency."⁵³ Ariel Gore also uses this language when she considers the benefits of fiction versus non-fiction: "In fiction, there are certain prices we do not have to pay."⁵⁴ Certainly, the emotional cost of writing about identified others is clear in Ruth Behar's account of being shunned by family members who were angered by her stories.⁵⁵ Hers is a cautionary tale indeed. However, when reading the text, I was struck with guilt as to how much I was enjoying Behar's story. Why? Because in telling it she is still going against family members' wishes never to write about deceased relations again.⁵⁶ Names have been changed, but does that mean I should assume I am not reading about "them" at all and that this is a fictional, composite account? Or that I am reading about them, but with a different name? And if the latter is the case, does that not mean they are still identifiable? I am struck by the complexity of writing about writing about relational ethics.

I would never use students' names in my autoethnographic writing. Fictionalizing takes matters one step further, and has been a route that I have, until writing this, mostly ignored. Could I, like Sparkes, tell my story through "Bruce" or "Savannah" or "Isabel"? That certainly is an option. Yet, it would be remiss of me not to examine my motivations for making it *my* story, even though that desire might be something I am ashamed of. In truth, I re-read my diary entries and think "*Wow! That's powerful stuff.*" Within me is an ambition to lead the charge when it comes to writing about lived experiences of clinical supervision, and giving my voice to fictional composites feels as though I am letting something go. I also worry that what I write will be a pale imitation of the words in my journal. I am guilty of the charge of narcissism, and Giampietro Gobo's playful depiction of autoethnography as self-serving "intellectual masturbation" rings in my ears.⁵⁷ Perhaps the trick is to ensure that the fiction is as powerful as the original text. For me, this presents a significant challenge for my own writing skills, but one that I may have to overcome.

Process Consent

Martin Tolich's account of the "endemic problems" with autoethnographic ethics centers on the contradictions he sees.⁵⁸ In particular, he notes that Ellis tells her students to practice process consent, the act of checking that participants in the story want to be part of it. Tolich agrees with this strategy, and lists process consent as one of his "Foundational Guidelines" for autoethnographers.⁵⁹ However, as an example of saying but not doing, he then points to Ellis's own reluctance to show her mother a piece of writing that refers to her, for fear of her response.⁶⁰

I think back to my first publication about autoethnography, in which I mention my partner and replicate what he said to me about my love of autoethnography.⁶¹ Despite having concerns about the ethics of autoethnography, I did not ask his permission to do this. I think I mentioned in passing that I was using his words, but my chief memory is of him expressing delight at being included in my work and wanting to know if he was featured anywhere else. I did not practice process consent. Even if I had, I suspect he would have felt pressure—because of his desire to help me with my work, out of love for me, or just for a quiet life—to agree to be included in the text. Although I am "reticent," "concerned," and "plagued," I am also contradictory.

Couser recounts the tale of Patricia Hampl and her mother.⁶² Hampl wrote a poem that divulged her mother's (secret) epilepsy. Her mother felt betrayed. Hampl responded with two arguments. Firstly, that her mother should not feel

that epilepsy was something to be hidden away ("I had liberated my mother"⁶³). Secondly, that the revelation would not cause any harm. Hampl later said she would not use the poem but, knowing that it was one of her daughter's best works, her mother's "maternal devotion" prevailed and she allowed it.⁶⁴ I am inclined to agree with Couser's view that Hampl "violated her [mother's] privacy [and] also exploited her pride in a talented daughter."⁶⁵ Here, she had gained consent but (a) after the fact and (b) by playing on a complex maternal relationship. Given this, is the right course of action to insist that those writing about others obtain written consent prior to putting pen to paper and, afterwards, provide an opportunity to veto the work? I am not convinced. Ellis asserts that "all autoethnographers must resolve how and what to tell intimate others about how they have been included in [their] stories"⁶⁶ and I agree. We must wrestle with our worries and contradictions in order to come to a conclusion about what we are comfortable with when representing others. For when we do not worry about betrayal or exploitation, the potential for damage may be at its greatest.

AN UNEXPECTED DIALOGUE WITH CAROLYN ELLIS

I was privileged to be contacted by Carolyn Ellis after my first article on autoethnography was published. Following her advice to "ask questions and talk about [our] research with others, constantly reflecting critically on ethical practices at every step,"⁶⁷ I took the opportunity to ask the questions I posed at the beginning of this piece about her 2011 autoethnography on academic life.⁶⁸ Here (with her permission) I replicate her answers, followed by my reflection on our discussion:

ELAINE: Even though the students were not named, would those students be able to identify themselves and how would this characterization of their work make them feel?

CAROLYN: No they would not, though some may imagine it is they. I referred to undergraduates in general.

ELAINE: What impact might this piece have on your relations with current or future students—would they be worried that their work might end up in an autoethnographic article?

CAROLYN: Nobody's "work" or words ended up here unless I asked permission. Of course, that still doesn't stop students from worrying. I have written about students before, with permission, and I find that most students would really like to be in our stories, and assume, given my stance on ethics, that I

would ask their permission before writing about them, especially if they were identifiable.

ELAINE: Did the colleague who describes “death by small paper cuts” ever imagine that it would end up in print?

CAROLYN: Don’t know.

ELAINE: Did you obtain her consent to do so?

CAROLYN: Yes, in all cases in the story, contributors of responses and I emailed back and forth about including their words. I find most autoethnographers are fine being in our articles as long as they are consulted.

As I read Carolyn’s responses it dawned on me that I had found another hidden world. Beneath the published work lay a river of consultation and discussion; a concealed stream where ethical issues had been considered, processed, and resolved. Ultimately, I realized, Carolyn had put forward the text with which she was ethically comfortable.

MOVING FORWARD

I was fortunate to be able to have a dialogue with Carolyn Ellis. Her responses have forced me to think about how I read other autoethnographers’ work. However, outside of the literature I have already referenced, I am struck by the lack of open exploration and examination of ethical issues in autoethnography. Of the articles listed in my personal autoethnography literature review, 85% do not mention ethics whatsoever. For new autoethnographers, this creates three issues. Firstly, they may not consider ethical issues at all. Secondly, they may see autoethnography as a route by which ethical barriers can be avoided or skirted. Finally, they may be left with many questions and a sense of unease, which may lead them to abandon the methodology. I call for new autoethnographers to be bold and ask these questions. I have spoken to a number of skilled autoethnographers during the last three years. My experience is they want to talk about their work and are generous with their time. In making this call, I follow Couser, who sees the “relation between ethical approaches and cases. . . as a recursive and dialectical interaction” rather than a “deductive, one way application”.⁶⁹ Open dialogue is the way forward. I have another similarity with Couser. He does not want to police life writing.⁷⁰ Equally, I do not want to be (or be seen to be) the “Autoethnography Police.” I agree that “formal safeguards. . . while well intentioned. . . may be excessively burdensome.”⁷¹ Instead, our tools should be debate and critical exploration.

For my own part, I am not yet ready to share my journal entry. I have 12 students each year. Whilst I have not named the students in the entry, I suspect it

would not be difficult for them to identify themselves. I would not be happy to email the entry to my entire faculty, to wear it as a sandwich board or to see my participants sitting in the front row at a conference panel where I read it out.⁷² In essence, my gut feeling is that it is not right to do so, at least not at this stage. In the future, when more time has passed, then perhaps my view will change.

Is my decision the right one? On the one hand, my gut tells me it is, so I am choosing to listen. On the other hand, a number of life writers warn that we might not be best placed to judge what might or might not cause offense. Castro was surprised her husband was hung up on, as she puts it, the “small details” rather than larger revelations about their marriage (“I never read *Fortune* magazine,” he said).⁷³ Likewise, Jill Christman’s brother’s solitary critique of her story of family trouble covering neglect, separation, and drugs was to dispute the number of times her father chewed a piece of gum. Reflecting on this, Christman makes the following impassioned proclamation:

Here’s the lesson: when you’re sitting at your desk, recreating the lives of your loved one on the page for all to see, you cannot anticipate what will rub someone wrong. You think you can, and this inner anticipatory critic will hang you up. She will hold you by the ear and squeeze. Shake her off. She doesn’t know. The things she thinks will offend will not offend. The things she can’t even imagine will offend, the things she lets you tap tap tap right over—the chew count, for heaven’s sake—she will let slide unnoticed. Shake her off. Write your story.⁷⁴

Tempting as it is to throw caution to the wind and shake off my doubts, I remain convinced that now is not the right time to share the journal entry in its current form. I am comforted by Ruthellen Josselson’s note that “it is work we must do in anguish.”⁷⁵

I have failed to share my journal entry. Does this mean my time with autoethnography is over? No, it does not. Indeed, the internal struggle with disclosure should be seen as an integral feature of the autoethnographer. I can still analyze my words, and I can still share my observations, fears, multiple selves, insecurities, guilt, and pride in print. The hidden voice of the clinical supervisor will be heard, but only in a form I deem to be ethically right. My task as an ethically minded autoethnographer is to consider how best to represent this voice in the literature. This is not an easy, or quick, task. It may take many years before the story of 27 October 2014 is realized in print. But when it is, I will know that I have considered and processed and resolved my ethical questions. ■

ELAINE CAMPBELL is Associate Professor in Northumbria Law School at Northumbria University. I wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their detailed and insightful comments on earlier versions of this manuscript, and Stacy Holman Jones for encouraging the development of my criticality. Finally, I am indebted to Professor Elaine Hall for uttering the word “autoethnography” to me, thus sparking a fascinating new chapter in my academic and personal life. Correspondence to: Elaine Campbell, Northumbria Law School, Northumbria University, City Campus East, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8ST, England, UK. Email: elaine.campbell@northumbria.ac.uk.

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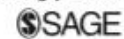
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Exploring Autoethnography as a Method and Methodology in Legal Education Research

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Abstract

Legal education is a new area for autoethnographic research. Indeed, there is a significant lack of autoethnography located in higher education generally. This article explicitly seeks to fill a considerable gap in the literature by fixing the narrative in the law school. Drawing on her own autoethnographic vignettes and reflexive journal entries, the author provides a first-hand account of entering the world of autoethnography. She argues that the hyper-reflexivity at the heart of a narrative approach is valuable and appropriate for legal education research. Yet, she also addresses and explores the challenges of such an approach, including subjectivity, ethics and the politics of discontent.

Autoethnography: Hyper-reflexivity

Vignette 1: I meet Alice and Ted

I stand on a crowded Metro train, heading home from work. Almost immediately, I find refuge in part of the carriage that divides the two seating areas. Here there is only space for a few people to stand and, out of politeness, most avoid. I am safe in this space. I greedily retrieve my latest autoethnography book from the bottom of my bag. It is battered and bruised. Pages are coming out at the back; the experienced life of a university library book. I pause for a moment to consider how many people have flicked through this book before me, how many children have put it in their mouths, and how many bags it has rested in on other journeys to someone's home. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it.

I find the chapter I want to read. It is an abortion narrative. Performed by 'Alice' and 'Ted', the authors speak to the audience and to each other. This is Carolyn Ellis & Art Bochner's story—their lived experience of an unwanted pregnancy 10 weeks into their relationship. As the fear, joy, confusion, resignation, anger and numbness spills from the page, I am living the experience with them. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it. As the story reaches its crescendo and Alice is entering the hospital, I start to feel sick. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it. I feel lightheaded. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it. I feel a dull ache in my stomach. The train sways from left to right taking my body with it.

I find a seat and take deep breaths. I send a WhatsApp message to my partner, telling him it's the closest I've ever come to passing out.

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Autoethnography is a research method and methodology which uses the researcher's personal experience as data to describe, analyze and understand cultural experience.² It is a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context.³

The phrase was first employed (as 'auto-ethnography') in the 1970s. The anthropologist Karl Heider⁴ used it to describe the way in which members of a culture—in his case, 60 Grand Valley Dani schoolchildren—could give accounts about their own experiences by giving responses to the question 'what do people do?'. Later, David Hayano⁵ used the phrase to explain the phenomenon of ethnographers researching their 'own people'. Whilst Heider and Hayano brought autoethnography into the research lexicon, the traditional notions of ethnographic research endured. There remained a separation between the researcher and the researched.

Throughout the 1980s, propelled by a 'crisis of representation',⁶ social researchers started to 'radically rethink'⁷ the way that they conducted research. Autoethnography emerged as a method which allowed research to be done on one's self. Those at the forefront of this new movement, such as Carolyn Ellis, Art Bochner and Norman Denzin, rejected positivist notions of truth and validity. They argued that personal narrative could produce complex and meaningful phenomena which introduced unique ways of thinking and feeling and helped people to make sense of themselves and each other.⁸ By putting the researcher's experience, emotions and interactions at the centre of the story, this made the research into that particular phenomenon richer and more meaningful. Personally, I think of autoethnography as an 'ultra' or 'hyper'-reflexive process.

By its very nature, autoethnography is both process and product. You 'do' autoethnography. Autoethnographic researchers write novels,⁹ narratives,¹⁰ conversations,¹¹ field notes,¹² diaries and journals.¹³ Autoethnography is known to 'incite creativity'¹⁴ and this has led to a performative¹⁵ and poetic¹⁶ strand known as interpretative autoethnography.¹⁷ Madison has described performative autoethnography as writing that shows, does not tell, hesitates, stutters, enacts what it describes, is

² TONY E. ADAMS, STACEY HOLMAN JONES & CAROLYN ELLIS, *AUTOETHNOGRAPHY* 1–2 (Oxford University Press, 2015).

³ Deborah Reed-Danahay, *Autoethnography*, in *THE SAGE DICTIONARY OF SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS* 15, 15 (Victor Jupp ed., SAGE Publications, 2006).

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⁵ David M. Hayano, *Auto-ethnography: Paradigms, Problems, and Prospects*, 38 *HUMAN ORGANIZATION* 99 (1979).

⁶ Adams et al., *supra* note 2, at 9.

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⁸ For a brief history of autoethnography, see Adams et al., *supra* note 2, at 17–19.

⁹ CAROLYN ELLIS, *THE ETHNOGRAPHIC I: A METHODOLOGICAL NOVEL ABOUT AUTOETHNOGRAPHY* (AltaMira Press, 2004).

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¹¹ Carolyn Ellis & Arthur P. Bochner, *Telling and Performing Performing Personal Stories: The Constraints of Choice in Abortion*, in *INVESTIGATING SUBJECTIVITY: RESEARCH ON LIVED EXPERIENCE* 79 (Carolyn Ellis & Michael G. Flaherty eds, 1992).

¹² Elaine Jenks, *Searching for Autoethnographic Credibility: Reflections from a Mom with a Notepad*, in *ETHNOGRAPHICALLY SPEAKING: AUTOETHNOGRAPHY, LITERATURE, AND AESTHETICS* 171 (Arthur P. Bochner & Carolyn Ellis eds, 2002).

¹³ Margaret Vickers, *Researchers as Storytellers: Writing on the Edge—and Without a Safety Net*, 8 *QUALITATIVE INQUIRY* 608 (2002).

¹⁴ Dwayne Custer, *Autoethnography as a Transformative Research Method*, 19 *THE QUALITATIVE REPORT* 1, 6 (2014).

¹⁵ Tami Spry, *Unseating the Myth of a Girl and Her Horse, now that's True Grit*, 12 *CULTURAL STUDIES—CRITICAL METHODOLOGIES* 482 (2013).

¹⁶ D.I. Hanauer, *Growing Up in the Unseen Shadow of the Kindertransport: A Poetic-narrative Autoethnography*, 18 *QUALITATIVE INQUIRY* 845 (2012).

¹⁷ For an excellent introduction to interpretive autoethnography, see NORMAN K. DENZIN, *INTERPRETIVE AUTOETHNOGRAPHY* (SAGE Publications, 2014).

evocative, reflexive; writing to embrace, enact, embody, effect.¹⁸ However, this description can equally be applied to other forms of autoethnography. The doing and producing are inextricably connected, and many autoethnographers make use of extracts of their stories to facilitate insight into the research process itself.¹⁹

By immersing ourselves in a personal narrative, we too can undergo that experience. Not everyone will have the strong visceral reaction which I had when I read Ellis and Bochner's story of abortion. However, my response to that piece demonstrates the power of storytelling. Not only did I find myself being placed in role of Alice, I was also Ted—trying to work out a way of supporting Alice whilst wrestling with my own conflicting feelings about becoming a parent. I was then able to come to an understanding about my own social identity and my own internal processes in respect of pregnancy. Ellis and Bochner were being hyper-reflexive, but so was I. On that Metro journey, it was a whirling cycle of Ellis, Bochner, Alice, Ted and me; all trying to make sense of an experience and analyzing our own 'cultural norms, experiences and practices'.²⁰

Becoming an Autoethnographer

I was first introduced to autoethnography by my research mentor. She noted that my written work leaned towards reflection and that I appeared to have a strong desire to express myself. With that in mind, I might be interested in autoethnography. Faced with a word that I had never heard of, the following vignette describes what happened next.

Vignette 2: Finding My Island

I realised that autoethnography was for me about 15 minutes after pressing play on a YouTube video²¹ of Art Bochner and Carolyn Ellis. At the time, I had no idea that Art and Carolyn were the architects of autoethnography. Their names were unfamiliar and it was by chance that I came to see them and hear their voices. It was late and dark and I was tired. The iPad followed me around the house as I cooked and tidied up. I checked work emails and planned strategies. Then I typed 'autoethnography' into Google. The video was fairly near the top. Easier to listen to people speaking than try to read as you're sorting the house, I thought.

Listening to Art and Carolyn I began to realise that autoethnography would allow me to use my personal voice. It would grant me permission for perspective to be communicated as research.... I wrote in my diary that I had 'found my island'.

I began to consume autoethnographical articles. I read at least two a day—one on the way to work, one on the way home. I asked for autoethnography books for Christmas. I followed all the autoethnographers on twitter.

Several times during this vignette, I speak of the 'permission' given by autoethnography to use the personal voice. It 'allows' me to communicate my thoughts, feelings and experiences. On analysis,

¹⁸ D.S. Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, quoted in *id.* at 21.

¹⁹ Kathryn Haynes, *Tensions in (re)Presenting the Self in Reflexive Autoethnographical Research*, 6 *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONS AND MANAGEMENT: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL* 134 (2011).

²⁰ Adams *et al.*, *supra* note 2, at 26.

²¹ CAROLYN ELLIS & ARTHUR BOCHNER, *AUTOETHNOGRAPHY IN QUALITATIVE INQUIRY* (2014), available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKZ-wuJ_vnQ (last visited June 19, 2015).

the language I have used derives from a perceived criticism of my work. Drafts submitted for peer review have been universally described as 'engaging'. Whilst this has positive connotations, I have come to see it as a (negative) judgement on the merits of my scholarship. My work is engaging—but not robust. It is engaging—but not academic enough. It is engaging—but contains too many personal views.

Criticism on the reflective nature of my work has meant that I have, on occasion, changed my writing style and used forms of research (such as focus groups/interviews) that are viewed as being more acceptable. I described this process to colleagues as 'an exercise in sucking the life out of the text'. This accords with Richardson's²² view of traditional academic writing, where the style is 'deadening'²³ even when the topic is riveting. This is because it includes:

passive voice, absent narrator, long, inelegant, repetitive authorial statements and quotations; 'cleaned up' quotations, each sounding like author; hoards of references; sonorous prose rhythms, dead or dying metaphors; lack of concreteness or overly detailed accounts; tone deafness; and, most disheartening, the suppression of narrativity.²⁴

The latter issue—the rejection of storytelling—is the most troubling. We need stories of lived experience in order to amass multilayered knowledge of a phenomenon, understand its truths and meanings and its place in the culture. The thick description embodied in an autoethnographic approach can help make sense of our own experiences. Whilst we write about different issues, I agree with Lisa Tillmann-Healy's straightforward explanation as to the value of autoethnographical writing: 'I can show you a view no physician or therapist can, because, in the midst of an otherwise "normal" life, I experience how a bulimic *lives* and *feels*.'²⁵

The Place for Autoethnography in Legal Education Research

Legal education lends itself well to autoethnography. It is a rich site of interest from which illuminative questions about our socio-cultural life, constraints and desires can be raised. The issues faced by many legal educators—the changes to legal training, new understandings of what it is to be a lawyer, legislative effects, student and staff engagement with technology, different constructions of good 'teacherhood', distance learning and other modes of teaching, the diverse make-up of student bodies (to name but a few)—are rich pickings. However, perhaps surprisingly, academic practice in higher education is an under-examined area in autoethnographic literature.²⁶

Reed-Danahay is a strong critic of 'misleading'²⁷ titles which mention educational settings but do not 'deal explicitly with academic practices and university settings'.²⁸ I agree with her visualization of the university as a site of 'power and conflict' whilst being, at the same time, a location for 'intellectual

²² Laurel Richardson, *The Consequences of Poetic Representation*, in *INVESTIGATING SUBJECTIVITY: RESEARCH ON LIVED EXPERIENCE* 125 (Carolyn Ellis & Michael G. Flaherty eds, 1992).

²³ *Id.* at 131.

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ Lisa Tillmann-Healy, *A Secret Life in a Culture of Thinness: Reflections on Body, Food, and Bulimia*, in *COMPOSING ETHNOGRAPHY: ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF QUALITATIVE WRITING* 76, 80 (Carolyn Ellis & Arthur P. Bochner eds, 1996).

²⁶ Deborah Reed-Danahay, *Anthropologists, Education, and Autoethnography*, 38 *REVIEWS IN ANTHROPOLOGY* 28, 38 (2009).

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ *Id.* at 39.

growth and discovery'.²⁹ I would also add that higher education can be a sphere for human (not just academic) development and discovery, especially in the interactions between teachers and students. In clinical legal education circles, for example, clinicians (such as myself) often claim that live client clinic provides a space for a transformative event in our students' lives. Much of this is due to the collegiate nature of the role of the clinical supervisor and student as they work towards the common goal of advising the client. Yet, we rarely provide any evidence for any such transformation beyond survey data and extracts from student feedback questionnaires. We do not delve into our own thoughts, feelings, emotions and interactions as a way of understanding our own roles and the educational and personal effect(s) that role has. Like Reed-Danahay, I want critical autoethnography to adopt education—in this case legal education—as a 'realm for observation and analysis'³⁰ so that our knowledge can make a contribution to the field. I want to see rich, analytical autoethnographies where teachers engage in hyper-reflexivity which allows all of us to enter their world and gain a deeper understanding of the culture of legal education.

What is the reason for the lack of autoethnography in legal education? The answer to this can perhaps be found by going back to Richardson's critique of traditional writing styles. In that piece, she appears to rally against the condemnation of reflective pieces—that 'making that [lived] experience the centre-piece of an article seems Improper, bordering on Gauche and Burdensome'.³¹ However, she then goes on to say that in breaching 'sociological writing expectations by writing sociology as poetry', she hopes she's not gone 'beyond Improper'.³² This demonstrates the problem I believe legal educators are faced with. We often hear of imposter syndrome where scholars feel that they are unworthy of entering the academic sphere, regardless of their abilities and accomplishments. Those who wish to publish narrative, autoethnographic accounts suffer from a similar issue—the sense that this is unworthy and not sufficiently academic. We could call this 'improper syndrome'. Earlier this year, I noted in my reflective diary that I was haunted by the remarks that I made to colleagues where I said that my autoethnographic work was '*easier, because it's all about me*'. Here, I was falling directly into the trap of making excuses for my methodology. I was endorsing the idea that my work was less academic because of its style. What I should have done was explain that I had 'found my island' and therefore, the words simply flowed onto the page with greater ease. If we accept the idea that 'improper syndrome' is an imposed construct, then we should not be worried about being criticized in this way. We should, however, be prepared to provide a strong, clear and unapologetic explanation as to why autoethnographic work has value within our field.

Difficulties with Autoethnographical Writing

I believe in the relevance, value and power of autoethnographical legal education research. Nevertheless, I also wrestle with a number of reservations, questions and worries. This article is not intended to provide an in-depth exploration of those issues, but it would be wrong not to (at the very least) acknowledge them.

As I have taken my first steps into autoethnography, three issues have been at the forefront of my concerns. These are subjectivity, ethics and (what I call) the politics of discontent.

²⁹ *Id.*, at 42.

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ Richardson, *supra* note 22, at 126.

³² *Id.*

Subjectivity

In his article exploring the 'criteria' that we, as scholars, judge our work on, Bochner writes that there is no right way of doing social science research.³³ The academic world, he says, is 'preoccupied with rigor' but 'neglectful of imagination'.³⁴ Initially, my concern on reading that piece was that the introduction of imaginative elements could mean that narrative research turned into an exercise in fictional storytelling. This was compounded when I read Bochner's declaration that the purpose of self-narrative is 'to extract meaning from experience rather than to depict the experience exactly as it was lived'.³⁵ I wrote in my reflective diary: '*This is my concern...I'm not re-enacting everything exactly as it occurred.*' The fact that I have edited that extract from my own diary (as it contained a reference to field notes that I felt did not fit within this section on subjectivity) shows that experiences can be altered or reinterpreted by the teller to suit the purpose of the story.

Over time, I have found that I have come to favour Anteby's view that the taboo against telling our stories 'stems from an epistemological misunderstanding'.³⁶ It is our own involvement in the story—not the precise replication of the event—which can provide strong theoretical insight. We are conditioned as researchers to see subjectivity as a contaminant. Yet, that contaminant is always present. As Peshkin states, 'whatever the substance of one's persuasions at a given point, one's subjectivity is like a garment that cannot be removed. It is insistently present in both the research and non-research aspects of our life'.³⁷ Instead of trying to remove the garment and declare ourselves clean of subjectivity, it is important to acknowledge it and deeply analyze the reasons why the researcher has approached issues, questions and experiences in that way.

Ethics

The central maxim for the ethical researcher is 'do no harm'. Researchers—be using qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods—must take into consideration the effect their study will have on any human participants. In traditional research, one of the ways of countering any ethical issues is to obtain informed consent from your participants. This is usually by way of a formal consent form which is accompanied by a description of the purpose and structure of the study. This works efficiently in traditional legal education research where participants (typically students) are interviewed, or complete a survey or questionnaire. You might expect an autoethnographical study to be simpler. After all, the only participant is the researcher and therefore informed consent is surely implicit? However, as this next section shows, autoethnographical accounts put the researcher on 'dodgy ground'.³⁸

Vignette 3: Self-care

When I excitedly follow my partner around the kitchen rambling excitedly about this new methodology I have discovered, he stops, turns to me and says:

³³ Arthur P. Bochner, *Criteria against Ourselves*, 6 QUALITATIVE INQUIRY 266, 268 (2000).

³⁴ *Id.* at 267.

³⁵ *Id.* at 270.

³⁶ Michel Anteby, *Relaxing the Taboo on Telling Our Own Stories: Upholding Professional Distance and Personal Involvement*, 24 ORGANIZATION SCIENCE 1277, 1278 (2013).

³⁷ Alan Peshkin, *In Search of Subjectivity—One's Own*, 17 EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER 17, 17 (1988).

³⁸ Pat Sikes, *On Dodgy Ground? Problematics and Ethics in Educational Research*, 29 INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH & METHOD IN EDUCATION 101 (2006).

'Actually, I think this is quite dangerous for you.'

'Why?' I blurt out in a somewhat teenage-like way, with facial expressions to match.

He doesn't answer directly. Something about too much introspection (though he doesn't use the word). Something about thinking too much and getting carried away. I am disappointed and frustrated that he isn't as excited as me, but I know exactly what he's trying to say. I can already feel this research ticking away at the back on my head, non stop. If I go down this path the research button will always be flicked 'on' and never 'off'.

I have had many (internal) discussions about whether to disclose that conversation in this article. That, in itself, is evidence of the difficulties associated with autoethnography. How much do you give away? What if your story brings up issues that you hadn't fully appreciated, or had locked away and were ignoring? Looking at it from another perspective, what if you are comfortable with what you are saying, but others are not? The fundamental question is: 'do I have the courage to be totally honest no matter what I might find?'³⁹

Sikes⁴⁰ notes that an increase in professional doctorates have led to an increase in research based on a workplace topic. She warns that this 'insider research'⁴¹ is 'inherently sensitive'⁴² and therefore, 'potentially dodgy in both ethical and career development terms'.⁴³ The fact that she doesn't go on to say how to deal with the dodgy ground, or how those career development issues might manifest, makes the issue all the more concerning. There is a heightened risk for educational researchers compared to, for example, researchers who are exploring their own health issues. We are researching our own career and what we say can be interpreted, not necessarily with positivity, by those who are in senior management positions.

One of my favourite pieces about being an academic is Carolyn Ellis' 2011 article entitled 'Jumping On and Off the Runaway Train of Success: Stress and Committed Intensity in an Academic Life'.⁴⁴ Here, she uses the lyrics of Soul Asylum's *Runaway Train* as a lens through which she can describe how she was 'derailed' and 'blowing the whistle' during a difficult period in her working life. Ellis' rich description of the 'committed intensity'⁴⁵ of academic life struck a chord. It was the first time I had read a piece that provided such a personal and frank account of the daily struggles associated with academic life within a university. However, I also queried how she got away with exposing to all who read the piece, how she woke up at 3 a.m. most mornings, overworked and full of stress. There was subtle—but present—criticism of her superiors. This was something which made me recoil from the page. Whilst this was a truthful account, how might it affect her relationships with her colleagues; her career prospects? On reflection, what I was doing was trying to reconcile my belief that autoethnography is a powerful tool in legal education research and my desire to protect my own position as a participant in that research process. This is something that I am still processing.

Conference Paper Abstract: Should I Read My Journal Entry to You?

The abstract given next is from a paper that I will present at the British Autoethnography Conference in October 2015, Aberdeen, Scotland. It is replicated in its entirety, including original referencing style.

³⁹ Diane Watt, *On Becoming a Qualitative Researcher: The Value of Reflexivity*, 12 *THE QUALITATIVE REPORT* 82, 87 (2007).

⁴⁰ Sikes, *supra* note 38, at 110.

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ *Id.*

⁴⁴ Carolyn Ellis, *Jumping On and Off the Runaway Train of Success: Stress and Committed Intensity of an Academic Life*, 34 *SYMBOLIC INTERACTION* 158 (2011).

⁴⁵ *Id.*

The abstract directly confronts my concern as to how I can do autoethnography without harming anyone who might be or become part of my story.

On the morning of Monday 27th October 2014 I walked into my office, took my coat off, sat down at my desk and wrote 407 words in my journal. My pen worked quickly. The words flowed. I wrote how I felt about my students, the legal work I was overseeing, and the committed intensity (Ellis, 2011) of academic life. I closed the journal, and got on with the rest of my day.

Should I share those words with you?

My reticence to do so is shaped by my identity as an experiential educator. I supervise law students working in the Student Law Office, a solicitors' practice at the heart of a degree programme which emphasises learning through doing. As a supervising clinician, I am required to continuously assess my students' performance—their autonomy, professionalism, research, written skills, knowledge, understanding, and commitment—as they provide free legal advice to the public.

If I share the journal entry, how will my students react to my words? Will they query if and how my emotions affected my assessment of their work? Even though they are not named, they are visible participants in my story. Chang (2008), and Tolich's (2010) criticism of autoethnographic ethics hangs heavy.

It is inevitable that other people will be (in)direct participants in autoethnographic research. Even if I went on a year-long retreat into a cave without human company, I would naturally reflect on the people whom I had encountered in my life, those who moulded me, those whose advice I did or did not heed. At the end of the conference paper, I will make the decision as to whether to share the journal extract with the audience or not.

The guidance on third-party ethics in autoethnography is of varying quality. Many articles either raise it as an issue and then offer generic advice, or simply skirt around the problem. Tolich⁴⁶ appears to be angered by what he sees as lax ethical approaches in autoethnography, and the harm that this can cause (indirect) participants. Using Jago's account of battling depression whilst an academic as an example, he both praises and takes issue with *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* which published her article. In that article, Jago writes about 23 persons or groups, including students, her therapist, former and current partners, her academic dean and other colleagues. Tolich congratulates the journal 'for acting as a watchdog'⁴⁷ and raising concerns about those whose personal experiences were referenced in the story. However, he also states that the journal failed to go 'far enough ethically',⁴⁸ noting that gaining retrospective consent from those participants would always be a coercive process. As he puts it:

Jago self-reported being on a knife edge or razor edge whilst writing the article, and that the publication of the article underpinned her academic salvation....Under these circumstances, how could any of the 23 persons listed in the article say, 'No, don't use my story'?⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Martin Tolich, *A Critique of Current Practice: Ten Foundational Guidelines for Autoethnographers*, 20 *QUALITATIVE HEALTH RESEARCH* 1599 (2010).

⁴⁷ *Id.* at 1601.

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ *Id.*

Drawing together a number of publications on relational ethics, Tolich presents 10 foundational guidelines⁵⁰ which are:

1. Respect participants' autonomy and the voluntary nature of participation, and document the informed consent processes that are foundational to qualitative inquiry.⁵¹
2. Practice 'process consent', checking at each stage to make sure that participants still want to be part of the project.⁵²
3. Recognize the conflict of interest or coercive influence when seeking informed consent after writing the manuscript.⁵³
4. Consult with others.⁵⁴
5. Do not publish anything that you would not show the persons mentioned in the text.⁵⁵
6. Beware of internal confidentiality.⁵⁶
7. Treat any autoethnography as an inked tattoo by anticipating your future vulnerability.⁵⁷
8. No story should harm others, and if harm is unavoidable, take steps to minimize harm.⁵⁸
9. Use a nom de plume if you are unable to minimize risk.⁵⁹
10. Assume all people mentioned in the text will read it someday.⁶⁰

It is difficult to argue with these sensible guidelines. Yet, I am still left with questions as to how to obtain consent from people when I do not know if and how they will be part of the story. When I am writing the story, do I have to stop and gain consent if I suddenly realize that I am writing about another human? Do I walk around the law school going from room to room to announce, '*I am an autoethnographer and I might write something which may or may not have a connection to you one day*'? At the start of the academic year, do I need to tell students about my research and ask them to complete an informed consent form on the chance that I might write them into my story? I have not found answers to these questions.

As my conference paper abstract shows, my main concern as a new autoethnographer is that students will read my work and have an unfavourable impression of me as a teacher. Teachers should be the swan, gliding away on the surface whilst furiously flapping out of sight deep within the water. Exposing the inner workings of and influences on my academic practice may lead to former students questioning how I have interacted with them and their work. As educators, we are happy sharing teaching strategies (for example, how to encourage a quiet student to participate more in class). Writing directly about a particular student, our feelings and thoughts (frustration? disappointment? bias?) towards that student, and how that interaction affected our day is something completely different. I do worry that this will do harm. I am, however, encouraged by Akinbode's account of sharing her narrative of teaching practice and experience

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ *Id.* at 1607–08.

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ *Id.*

⁶⁰ *Id.*

with a group of students, set out next. In exploring her lived experience with students, Akinbode was able to access the students' own lived experience and construct a congruent narrative, which offers a valuable and meaningful account of a much talked-about element of teaching practice:

I read out my narrative, not expecting these student nurses to be interested. The first response came from a student who had been quiet and had not yet spoken in the two hours that we had been together; however, I had been very aware of her. She said that my description of being 'invisible' described perfectly her regular classroom experience.⁶¹

The Politics of Discontent

Autoethnography is being increasingly adopted by a number of researchers, but this means that it has been reduced to the unfortunate moniker of 'mesearch'.⁶² On the surface, this is fun way to describe the main element of the methodology—to look within one's self. However, the idea that 'it's all about me!' leads autoethnographers into dangerous territory.

In their 2015 article, 'Storm Surge: An Autoethnography about Teaching in the Australian Outback', Ernst and Vallack write about the implementation of a new, assessment-driven National Curriculum.⁶³ The authors' frustration with the new system is palpable from the beginning of the piece. They wanted to get ethical approval to investigate the effect of the curriculum on their students. This was denied. Therefore, they write, autoethnography gave them 'license to write my story'.⁶⁴ Reading the piece, there is a strong sense of glee, rubbing hands together and going, 'right, let me tell you what I think about this!'

I understand Ernst and Vallack's frustration at a system which places testing above learning, creativity and enjoyment. The examples they give of the children adversely affected by the new curriculum are compelling, and they clearly have the children's best interests at heart. However, I question whether the purpose of autoethnography is to give us a 'license' to air our grievances. In my reflective diary, I wrote: 'Comes across as a great big moan at the system and the people who are pushing forward the changes. Feeds right into my fears that AE [autoethnography] will just be a big tool to moan.'

Like Tolich, I also query the effect that this piece could have on the children, parents and colleagues (some of whom disclosed that they were on leave for stress) written into the story. In the article, Ernst and Vallack wrote that as they were not involving co-researchers, they did not need ethical approval to write the piece. Autoethnography should not be used as a method to avoid ethical discussions. We need critical, analytical autoethnographies, not ethically questionable rages.

⁶¹ Adenike Akinbode, *Teaching as Lived Experience: The Value of Exploring the Hidden and Emotional Side of Teaching through Reflective Narratives*, 9 STUDYING TEACHER EDUCATION: A JOURNAL OF SELF-STUDY OF TEACHER EDUCATION PRACTICES 62, 69 (2013).

⁶² See Emma Rees, *Self-reflective Study: The Rise of 'Mesearch'*, TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION, 19 March 2015, available at <https://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/features/self-reflective-study-the-rise-of-mesearch/2019097.article> (last visited July 6, 2015).

⁶³ Ruth Ernst & Jocene Vallack, *Storm Surge: An Autoethnography about Teaching in the Australian Outback*, 21 QUALITATIVE INQUIRY 153 (2015).

⁶⁴ *Id.*

Conclusion

In this article, I have used a reflexive autoethnographic method to demonstrate the value of such an approach in legal education research. Narrative approaches—if approached critically and with an analytical framework—can both capture and produce meaningful phenomena. Although there are still unanswered questions in respect of ethical issues, legal education teaching and practice is a rich field which is yet to be mined by autoethnographic researchers. If we can begin to produce deep, critical autoethnographies, locating our narrative in the law school, then we can allow others to understand our socio-cultural practices and experiences.